

Halo: First Contact

by FuzyDr4G0NZ

Category: Halo, Mass Effect

Genre: Adventure, Sci-Fi

Language: English

Status: In-Progress

Published: 2012-12-19 23:20:24

Updated: 2013-08-27 02:06:19

Packaged: 2016-04-27 03:55:08

Rating: T

Chapters: 16

Words: 62,980

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: An Asari Deep space exploration craft discovers an unknown wreck in space, meanwhile the UNSC Gorgon is sent out on a scouting mission into the lost outer colonies.

1. Chapter 1

A/N; So I decided to try my hand at a real ME/Halo cross, so tell me what you think people, is it good enough?

Uncharted space- 40 light years away from Harvest remains of the UNSC **_Lowrentz,**_** March 4th**_**2586**

The UNSC Lowrentz was a ship of the line during her heyday; she was a powerful UNSC Destroyer that could give just about any other ship in the Human arsenal a run for their money, unfortunately when compared to a Covenant Battleship she might as well have been a single ship for the damage she had dealt. She had been hit by a Covenant plasma weapon during Cole's last attempt to win the battleâ€| which he did and the unlucky crew of the Lowrentz never got to see the first Covenant ship out of over three hundred to fall to Cole's tactical genius, instead they died in the cold vacuum of space over a planet they thought immune to war, which seemed to plague humanity wherever it went, they were killed by an alien they had never seen before or even knew existed until that day

XX

Uncharted space-Asari Republic Exploration Vessel **_Goddess Sunrise- **_**2153 Citadel Standard**

Inside the cavernous CIC of the Goddess Sunrise, Captain Asri N'lorik was pacing, they were still around forty light years away from the nearest star system, that meant almost three weeks travel by conventional FTL travel, her crew had already been going for over a month and they were getting bored, it was one of many down sides to a

deep space expedition, having nothing to do while in FTL for extended periods of time.

A deep space expedition held many dangers but none was more pressing than the build-up of heat and static electric energy and with no planets to discharge the Mass Effect core nearby the designers of the Goddess Sunrise had to get creative. The Sunrise was only as big as a standard Citadel Frigate, but it had no weapon systems, instead the space was used for food and water storage, it even towed along a large container full of supplies. To overcome the heat build-up several huge heat sinks were installed near the core and were cooled by a new Salarian coolant system, the Static build-up however is trapped in an artificial electromagnetic field in a capsule behind the storage container and extra fuel tanks.

Asri was about to leave the bridge for her quarters when the NAV officer called out to her,

"Captain, I'm picking up a large object on the long range scanners directly in our path." Andrios K'Sana informed Asri,

"Well then drop out and get us on a path to the system without something in our way," Asri snapped at the younger Asari Maiden, Asri hadn't meant to snap like that but the long trip was taking its toll, even for a patient and 'wise' Asari Matron.

Soon after the Sunrise dropped out of FTL with a slight shudder, 'strange transition out of FTL is usually seamless' Asri thought to herself,

"Ma'am, multiple objects have struck the hullâ€| but there hasn't been any reported damage," sensor operator Valavi T'Lona reported, "Uhhâ€| Ma'am? The objectâ€| it's artificial," Valavi added after the initial scans had come back,

"Artificial? Like a Ship?" Asri asked, intrigued now, Valavi nodded and pulled up an image of the object, perhaps the trip would be more interesting than originally thought.

The image showed an object around the size of a cruiser, its hull was a dark grey with patches of white, Asri assumed it was part of the language used by the creators of the ship, its rear end had been melted and had sheared off, following the wreckage on its path through the empty void of space, several other holes in the hull seemed to indicate that it been struck by several shots of what ever had disabled it. The halo of debris around the ship was made up of stray pieces of metal and small chunks of the ship, it was then that Asri realised what had impacted the Sunrise's hullâ€| bodies and debris that had been thrown ahead of the main wreck, her ship had literally ploughed through a grave yard.

Blocks of ice had started to form at the front of the boxy grey vessel, it clung to the AAA Helix turrets that dotted it hull, leaving it looking like it came out of a snow storm.

"Run a scan on that ship, I want to know everything there is to know about it, now!" Asri ordered, and the bridge crew immediately set to work, after nearly an hour of scans and analysis the data was sent to Valavi on sensors,

"Scans show the hull is some sort of Titanium alloy, stronger than anything currently used in current council ship designs, armament consists of one large Dreadnought sized cannon, several missile pods and a projectile based triple-A system. Internal layout scans were mostly blocked by the intact armour and ice build-up but I think we've located the bridge of the vessel." Valavi reported, she took a quick breath and carried on, "The entire rear end of the vessel is either in the orbiting debris field or has been turned into molten slag along with whatever powered it, there isn't a single trace of eezo on board but I think it's been drifting for too longâ€œ leaving any eezo trace behind and as for its ageâ€œ we think its roughly eighty years old based on the ice build-up and debris spread,"

Asri pondered this for a moment, perhaps some of the computer systems were still operational but without power, maybe they could find out what had happened to it, although the lack of any trace of eezo worried her slightly.

"Get a team ready, I want a team on board that wreck ASAP to try and recover anything from its data banks." Asri ordered.

XX

**Manchester Greater Industrial Complex-Apartment building A315-
Residence of Philip Walters-Earth-Sol System Thursday February
23****rd**** 2586 Military Calendar**

2nd Lieutenant Philip Walters was awakened from his peaceful slumber by his personal comm pad, someone was trying to get hold of him and it was letting him know, loudly, why someone thought that calling him in the middle of his shore leave was a good idea he didn't know. Quickly grabbing the offending device he tapped the screen and the face of his Commanding Officer greeted him, even while still in bed, and in the buff none the less, he saluted while still lying down and his cheeks instantly burned red, after all he was technically naked in front of his CO and saluting while still in bed.

Even though being in the Navy or military in general one gets rid of personal issues like being naked around one another, his problem stemmed from the fact that his CO was incredibly attractive and he had some sort of crush on her, what was worse was that she knew it as well.

"Saluting in bed Lieutenant? I'm sure you're not the only one that's saluting right now," she started and his cheeks flushed brighter, giving her the answer, "But onto a more serious matter im here to inform you that shore leave is being cut short, you're to be back on the Gorgon by 0700 hours on the 3rd, CENTCOM has a lovely mission for us, enjoy the rest of your leave Lieutenant, Jones out." Lieutenant Commander Katlin Jones finished before her face disappeared from his comm pad.

He let out a loud groan and looked at his watch before groaning again, he was to meet up with an old school friend at one O'clock and it was already half past twelve he still had to get up and shower before heading to meet his old friend.

'I am never ever drinking that much again.' He thought to himself, the he didn't get particularly drunk but he had an annoyingly high

alcohol tolerance, meaning more damage was done to his wallet than his memory of the previous night.

XX

UNSC Officers quarters- UNSC Dry dock-Liverpool ship building yard-Sol System February 23**rd**** 2586**

Recently promoted Commander Katlin Jones sighed; she had just finished informing the last of her crew about the cutting of their shore leave, most of them were pissed at the news, especially those that had a family or partners. But she had been given the orders by Lord Hood himself and they were indeed interesting orders, she and her crew were to scout out the 'Glasslands' for any outer colony that may have been left untouched or was at the very least able to be re-terraformed.

The brass was having them sent out as soon as possible, which was the 3rd of March, leaving a little over a week of shore leave left out of the four more they were promised, the worst thing about the mission was the ships that would be under her command, all three of which were as old if not older than MAC technology, hell the Jericho and Petra were old warships that should have been decommissioned five decades ago, but instead they were used as training ships during the war and then now after some refits they were being used as border patrol, just like they had been many, many years ago, during the Callisto incident in 2494, nearly a century ago, hell the Gorgon had been reclassified as a light Frigate and the Jericho and Petra were considered Corvettes when they had all been considered Destroyers when they were built.

The two ships, Jericho and Petra didn't even have a MAC gun, but they had been given some fairly standard shields and lot better armour along with an overhaul to the computer systems and missile silos which had been turned into Archer missile pods and some mass drivers to give them at least some teeth to bite with.

The three ships were so old in fact that they still had spinning sections for artificial gravity and they still had rubber floors, none of the shiny new decks and gravity plates the newer line of war ship used. The entire scouting mission was under the Command of Rear Admiral Jack Newman on board the Marathon-II Class Cruiser Ripper.

The Gorgon, Petra and Jericho were to scout out several systems starting with the Eridanus system and Eridanus II, they were also ordered to check out the asteroid belt near the heart of the system for any form of rebel survivors, the report form the Spartan-II seemed to indicate that they were killed by Covenant forces after Admiral Whitcomb left the system, leaving the rebels to their fate.

XX

Uncharted Space-Inside the wreckage-Hallway Alpha 7- Fourth deck- Near Hull Breach-2153 Citadel Standard

The team had just boarded the wreckage, some scattered debris floated around the otherwise empty hallway, small bits of ice had started to clump together at the corners where the wall met the floor, or roof.

Ashona Fera landed with a small thump on the rubber floor of the hallway, the rubber floor mean that the teams magnetic boots wouldn't stick, leaving them floating in the deserted, empty and downright creepy hallway.

The only light source for the team was either from the shuttle that had just dropped them off or from their own personal Omni-tools in built torch (flashlight), illuminating the dull frosted grey metal in small patched before it got swallowed by the darkness as the light moved.

"_Sunrise_ this Tia, we are currently inside the wreck and are about to continue further into the ship, do you copy?" Tia A'reena, the team leader reported,

"_Weâ€|heaâ€|ouâ€|aâ€|'re breaâ€|pâ€|" _the comm burst into static, leaving the team all alone in the foreboding hallway,

"Great, looks like we're on our own for now," Tia said although it was unneeded, they had already figured it out for themselves.

Tia slowly made her way forward before the rest of the team followed, they were careful to keep each other lit up, not allowing them to get plunged into the horrible suffocating darkness that surrounded them, to Ashona it was one of the creepiest and most terrifying moments in her hundred and thirty year life

The team came across a door; a large heavy metal door with several heavy locking mechanisms visible on its surface, a small manual console was on the wall next to it, covered in a thin layer of ice which Ashona quickly brushed away revealing a device embedded into the wall that was no bigger than her Omni-tool display, it was just a blank dark screen and without any form of power it was more than likely going to stay that way,

"Tia, I've found a console for the door, but it doesn't have any power," Ashona reported, "I might be able to hook up one of the portable generators to it and power it up but it'll take some time splicing into the alien system," Tia seemed to ponder this momentarily before agreeing,

"Do it, but don't take too long, even I can't breathe in vacuum," Tia told her in the deep voice that was common among Asari whose 'father' was a Krogan, Ashona quickly got to work but was difficult in the lack of gravity or without her magnetic boots.

It took about twenty minutes before she could even get the generator connected to the door, the power cables that lined the walls of the ship were meant to handle a whole lot more power than the generators could provide, and then there was the automated protocols that had tried to use that little amount of power for something else.

By the time Ashona had finally gotten the door open, nearly a third of their oxygen had been used up and when the door did open the team was left breathless.

Whereas the hallway section they had entered in had been devoid of just about anything the corridor beyond the door however wasn't. The team' lights illuminated the hallway in front of them and Ashona nearly threw up in her helmet, parts of the original crew were

floating lazily along with some whole bodies, but the poor souls had been exposed to the cold, harsh, unforgiving darkness of the vacuum, leaving the bodies flash frozen and in pieces after the sudden and violent change in pressure, some had gotten what appeared to be breathing apparatus but had suffocated or had frozen to death.

There was probably only around four or five crew members but all the frozen innards from the ones that had died from the change in pressure made it look like a lot more,

"Eumenia, Siani take one of the intact bodies back to the shuttle and tell them to take it back to the Sunrise so the biologists can go crazy," Tia ordered and the T'Nair sisters got straight to work,

Weaving in and out between the bodies they managed to get to the next door on their path towards the vessels bridge, and Ashona once again got to work on opening it, this time however was much faster than the first and by the time she was done the T'Nair sister re-joined the team at the door.

The path to the bridge was excruciatingly long as they were hindered by the heavy metal doors nearly every dozen meters, sometimes it was longer than that but it was still slow going, although they had collected several interesting objects that had been floating around like a small data tablet and what Ashona had guessed were personal items of crew members they kept passing, Tessa Jianni had muttered several prayers for the deceased members of the ships original crew, hoping they found peace in whatever afterlife they believed in, if any.

They had just returned to the shuttle, which had returned after dropping off the body on the Sunrise to change out their oxygen tanks and get some rest before they carried on, they were tired after several hours of zero-g work and weaving in and out of the frozen, dead crew. Even Tia was exhausted, it didn't help that there was absolutely no lights in that wreck except the ones they took with them. The Captain of the Sunrise had told them that they were to get back on that wreck as soon as they were rested, and then told them they had done a good job so far.

After several hours rest the team headed back into the wreckage, and head straight back to where they left off, they were just outside the bridge waiting on Ashona to get the last door open, which she promptly did, it had been a lot harder to get open then the rest simply because it was the door to the bridge, she would have been surprised if it hadn't been harder to crack. When it did open however they were once again rendered speechless.

XX

UNSC **_*Gorgon*_* ** Bridge-UNSC Dry Dock-Liverpool Ship Building Complex-0900hrs March 3**rd**** 2586 **

Lieutenant Commander Tristan Davis had been appointed as the XO of the Gorgon by Admiral Newman after the Commander's promotion and he was currently stood right behind Walters back, breathing down his neck while Philip tried to make sure all the weapons and shield systems were green, but it was near impossible with Davis' fish scented breath next to his ear, 'Why does he have to be close?'

Philip silently wondered to himself, it didn't help his breath smelled of fish which was making him gag with every breath Philip took.

Davis finally moved away and did the same to 2nd Lieutenant Pangilinan on the NAV station, the Ensigns had practically shrunk in their seats when he came near and then sprung back up as soon as he was gone.

Just as the final checks were being completed Commander Jones walked into the bridge and the entire bridge crew sat even straighter but didn't stop what they were doing,

"All systems are green and ready to go for lift off Ma'am," Davis reported, even his voice was irritating, it sounded like it was coming out of his nose more than his mouth,

"Good, Nav make sure we're clear to leave the docks and then get us into orbit and fall into position with the Jericho and Petra" Jones ordered, her voice sounded like an angels when compared to the XO's, or was that just him? She hadn't even taken her seat in the Command chair.

2nd Lieutenant Pangilinan or AJ as he was called by the rest of the bridge crew set to work on the assigned tasks while Lieutenant Owens was going on about some of the new refits to the Gorgon, while they weren't excessive they were noticeable, certainly to Philip as one of the upgrades was the improved Comm and sensor systems and some new duel turret mass driver cannons had been added, unfortunately whoever oversaw the overhaul didn't see fit to install some more modern reactors, this meant that he could only ever have the MAC and shield working or the Mass driver turrets and shield working, not both and even then the recharge for the MAC was slower than normal and the shields took several minutes to warm up before activating.

Of course he made his concerns known and the Commander told him, '_it will be fine, what are the chances of anything attacking us out there?_' he had gone to reply with the odds but she cut him off,

"It was a rhetorical question Lieutenant," she told him, he rolled his eyes and went back to calibrating the guns, it was probably all he would do during the entire mission,

"We're clear to leave the docks Ma'am," AJ reported, "keying engine start-up sequenceâ€¦now." He finished as the massive engine cone on the back flared a brilliant blue, the gigantic engines propelled the light Frigate up into the air and then orbit, Philip could see the massive orbital defence platforms and part of the Home Fleet, and of course the largest ship in the UNSC Navy, the Infinity, last he'd heard the Infinity was on some sort of super-secret mission near the edge of UNSC space.

The Petra and Jericho were waiting for them near Luna's orbit and as soon as the Gorgon was in position the Commander opened an Alpha Fleet comm channel and informed the Petra and Jericho that they were to commence the jump on her go which she gave at roughly 1000hrs, the three ships entered the eleventh dimension and sped on their way to system abandoned by the UNSC fifty six years ago.

XX

Uncharted Space-Inside the wreckage-Bridge-2153 Citadel Standard

Ashona and the rest of the team had set up multiple generators to supply power to the bridge consoles after they had moved the bodies out the way, the body in a chair at the centre of the bridge had a more decorated uniform, probably signifying that it was the Commanding Officer of the vessel, that being had commanded a very powerful vessel was it some sort hero to their people or was this just one of many ships like this in this peoples Navy?

Once all the power generators had been connected the bridge lit up, dozens of consoles lit up and a red emergency light doused the cavernous room a dark crimson, it was incredible the bridge seemed to be fully operational, and the view from the three super-strengthened glass windows at the front of the bridge was breath taking, Ashona could see the large white strip of the galaxy and it was _magnificent._

They had already started to download any information from the ships logs and data library but it was slow, _very_ slow, there must have been at least a dozen _terabits per subject,_ unfortunately most of the data seemed to have been corrupted during the many years of drifting and degradation to all the systems.

She pulled up several files; all of it was in the written language that the aliens used as well as multiple long and complicated sets of symbols and lines, if she were to guess she would have said they were equations but for what she had no idea. The equations she was looking at were in fact partially completed Shaw multi-variant calculus Slip-Space navigational input parameters, another file was a letter that was to be sent to the crewman's wife after the battle and another was a text only file- a book that was being read by one of the bridge crew during the few hours of down time.

The data transfer took longer than initially thought but it was eventually completed and all the scrap data was dumped, there was no point in blocking up the _Sunrise'_s memory banks with useless corrupted files.

The team was soon back on the _Goddess Sunrise_ where a team of Xenoscientists took any more of the items the team had recovered from the wreck for study, hopefully they would come up with a basic translation of the text soon.

Asri had contacted the Matriarch Council on Thessia who in turn notified the Citadel Council of the findings, they were to head back to the Citadel, on the way they were to try to translate and decipher as much as possible.

So the _Goddess Sunrise_ turned about, her engines flared and propelled it forward, back the way she came, the multiple objects that she towed slowly aligned themselves again before with small wink and a blue shift she zoomed into FTL.

XX

UNSC _** Gorgon-**_ **Slip-Space near the Eridanus System-0437hrs

Tuesday April 4****th**** 2586**

Philip Walters was quietly singing an old twenty first century song to himself, using his hands on his console as if it were a drum while waiting for his station to finish yet another calibration, the rest of the bridge crew were busy on their own stations even though it was still at least a day or two before they were scheduled arrival.

So it came to a bit of a shock to every one when the Gorgon shuddered and entered real space along with the Jericho and Petra,

"Report!" Commander Jones ordered and Owens started giving out the details,

"Looks like an 'eddy' got us; we dropped out at the edge of the system, ten million kilometres from our destination, I'm picking up five contacts on the long range scanners, too far away for any detail though," Owens reported as she took in the information displayed on her console,

"Get us closer to those contacts, I want to know who we're dealing with here, Weapons, raise shields and prep the MAC gun, I don't want to be caught with our pants down," Philip immediately set to work on getting the shields online but the generators weren't having it and the shields stayed down, the MAC gun did however start to charge as the Gorgon rumbled slightly as the main engines kicked in.

"Sir, shields aren't responsive, the reactors won't spare the power!" he called out,

"Dammit, Comm tell someone in engineering to get the reactors to spare the power for the shields," Jones barked,

"Contacts are goneâ€|Wait five contacts three thousand clicks ahead of usâ€| INCOMING!" Owens yelled, Jones cursed and opened a ship wide comm,

"ALL HANDS BRACE! BRACE!" Jones yelled before several shots impacted the two meter thick armour causing multiple hull breaches and shoving the multi-thousand ton Light Frigate off course, the air around Philip condensed into fog before explosive decompression blasted the air out of the bridge, the force of the decompression flew Philip into his console knocking him unconscious.

So was it good? Review and what not if you liked it.

2. Chapter 2

A/N: Soooâ€| yeah right chapter 2 already huh, so I noticed a few people asking 'Why hasn't the Cole protocol been done on the wreck? Well I am going to tell you now; the Cole protocol wasn't written until **_*after_* **_*the fall of the outer colonies, the_* **_*Lowrentz, the_* **_*wreck, was destroyed/disabled in 2526 during the second battle for Harvest, simple see.*

**Also here is a very important part-Spelling and grammar; While yes I'm not the best writer on the site and nor will I ever be but I do know how to spell and use proper grammar so I was quite peeved off

when someone (you know who you are) suggested I should educate myself on how to spell correctly and used proper grammar. Also I did go a little bit overkill on the commas in the last chapter, I apologize. Now the most important part I am from the UK and therefore use the 'English' version of English, so if someone calls me out on how I spell Colour or something with a 's' where you think it should be a 'z' you will be ignored, however I am not using this as an excuse and chances are I have made some mistakes and will do again.**

Okay rant over onto more fun stuff; I don't own any thing blah blah blah blah- you know the deal here, thanks to Just a Crazy-Man for looking over the work, and to Andrithir for having a look over chapter 1 to look for mistakes and what not.

That's it for now enjoy, but there will be an A/N afterwards to clear up a few things.

* * *

><p>Medical bay-_*_*Goddess Sunrise*_*_*-FTL en route to the Citidel-2153 Citadel Standard**

Asri had been enjoying some peace and quiet away from the hustle and bustle of the bridge before she been called down to the medical bay where the alien body now lay, it had been stripped and defrosted, allowing Asri to see the alien first hand.

The alien was similar, very similar, to an Asari, the same facial features and body structure, by the goddess the only real differences between the alien and an Asari was the colour of its skin, the strange coloured fur on top of its head and the strange appendage between its legs, if she were to guess than she would have said that it looked almost like male Asari, if one such thing existed of course. The corpse also had larger and a more dense muscle structure further indicating that it was a male of its species.

Thedala Visin, the chief medical officer and resident Exobiology expert and graduate from one of the most prestigious educational centres on Thessia, looked at her and smiled slightly,

"Judging by the look on your face I'm guessing you've already seen the main reason I called you down here, along with some other interesting things I've found," Thedala started off, "Now the real interesting stuff is on the inside, well actually it would be interesting if it were any different from our own," Asri stopped dead in her stride,

"Well, they're not 100% the same of course, they did after all evolve on a different planet, so things like bone and muscle density was slightly higher than an average Asari's, small thing as well like their immune system along with its temperature regulation system, and a lack of eezo in body suggests that it wasn't a biotic, although I did find something interesting in the back of its skull," Asri recovered, if only slightly from the shock,

"Oh?" she managed to get out,

"I think it might have been some sort of neural implant, based on the fact that it was linked with its brain, but I'm no technician it could just be something to help the dumber ones keep up for all I

know," Thedala finished, Asri was silent, the odds of a race that was so similar to her own, it was impossible, wasn't it?

"Right, have all the findings compiled into a report and send it to me, once all the reports are in I'll file it to the Council," Asri told her,

"Wait, the Council? I thought the Matriarchs decided against bringing in the rest of council after what happened with the Turians," Thedala questioned,

"Yes, well it seems they now know and that is the reason we're heading back, apparently they don't want us exploring without some form of protection," Asri responded before leaving the biologist alone with a dead body of a race that was uncannily familiar, just as the door shut behind her Asri heard Thedala say something,

"I bet the ladies just loved you huh, or is that considered small for species?" Asri suppressed her laughter, just, before continuing on, maybe the teams translating the file they had recovered has had some luck.

* * *

><p>Devastator-_*Bridge-Uncharted system-eighth lunar cycle 2153 Citadel Standard**

The Devastator was one of the most powerful Cruisers ever created by his people, while it wouldn't fare well against the more advanced Council ships it was still a formidable ship, especially against unarmoured and unarmed freighters and civilian ships although it was a bit unfair to compare it against those types of ships.

Charn would never admit it out loud he wasn't one for mass murder, slaving he could handle but killing thousands or millions of people even if they were below the mighty Batarian Hegemony, that was why as he stood there, in the middle of the bridge offering a silent prayer for the millions that would have died on yet another dead planet they had stumbled upon.

Ever since he and a lot of other forces were pushed out of known space by the Turians roughly sixty years ago they had stumbled upon at least thirty worlds exactly like the one they were orbiting, it was truly a horrible sight even for a Batarian. They did however come across one garden world, it was obviously a colony of some sort but the defences had been minimal ground side and none in orbit, the rogue Batarian elements leader, Edan Had'dah, had ordered them to enslave the entire planet and they did just that, it took nearly two months but they did it.

The species wasn't all that special, their children were weak, they winged and made noise all the time, the males were good manual labour though and their females? Well they were just as good as Asari for the purposes he used them for anyway, unfortunately Edan had sent him with four other Cruisers to scout out a bit further than previous attempts to hopefully find more of the colonies belonging to that pitiful race, it would be awhile before he'll get to make use of one of his slaves again.

"Order all ships to clear the gravity well and get ready for another

jump," Charn ordered and his underlings got straight to work, after all if they failed to do their job they were usually punished with a bullet to the brain,

"I'm picking up some strange readings from the edge of the system Sir, orders?" Charn weighed his options he could either; ignore it and get this assignment over and done with faster or he could investigate and find that it was probably a massive waste of time, it was an easy choice.

"Ignore it and get us into FTL, the sooner we're done the sooner we can go back," he ordered,

"Our FTL path takes us within three thousand kilometres of the anomaly," the sensor operator replied,

"So? It won't affect us while we're FTL will it?" Charn replied through gritted teeth, his hand twitching by his side arm, one he procured from the enslaved planet,

"Not unless it emits a strong enough gravitational flux," the operator relented,

"Well then, get us out of here, NOW!" Charn yelled the last bit having lost his temper,

The crew immediately set out to finish their assigned tasks and not piss him off any further,

"Jumping into FTL in three secondsâ€| twoâ€|oneâ€| now," the NAV officer called out as Charn sat in his command chair and relaxed it would be a few hours before they reached the next systemâ€| a sudden jolt sent Charn flying out of his seat,

"What the hell? I thought I saidâ€|" Charn began but he was cut off by the one of his operators, who yelled out in alarm,

"Three contacts, under four thousand kilometres distant, they have a profile of Cruisers," Charn like every other Batarian pirate/slaver had a habit of being hot headed and panicky when faced with an unprecedented situation and this was no exception,

"Fire on the leading ship!" he ordered as he got back onto his feet, just in time to see several mass accelerator rounds bounce off the armour leaving small but noticeable dents in the armour, more shots however hit their mark and small explosions could be seen and a small but greedy idea popped into his head,

"Wait! Disable it and then destroy the escorts," Charn ordered when one of the smaller light Cruisers, the Gutter, exploded,

"What the hell just happened?" Charn demanded, his temper was already starting to rise,

"The unknown escorts launched missiles; they impacted on the Gutter's barrier, but they still damaged her reactors, I think they might have been shaped warheads," the sensor operator informed him, just then the Devastator shook from kinetic rounds impacting her barriers, another one of his ships winked off the display,

"Blast it, destroy those damn escorts, NOW!" he yelled out in anger, the Devastator's guns quickly shifted their aim to the port side escort and let loose a volley of mass accelerator rounds, he had fully expected the rounds to smash into the ships armour, after all the leading ship didn't have any barriers so why would the escorts? He was poorly mistaken, the rounds dissipated against a brilliant golden barrier, the escort returned fire with both missiles and their own mass accelerators causing another one of his ships to lose its barriers and take some damage to its hull, and thankfully the GARDIAN laser system took out most of the blasted missiles.

The escort under fire from the Devastator finally succumbed to the fire power and its barriers failed, leaving its hull exposed to weapons fire, Charn let a small grin form after he was awarded with the sight of the escort turning into a scattering of burning debris, 'One down, one to go,' he thought to himself, the Harsa's Might had been pummelling its barriers with GARDIAN lasers and mass accelerator rounds and if Charn were to hazard a guess he would have said that it's barriers were more susceptible to the laser fire, althoughâ€¦

"Why the hell are their barriers stopping the laser fire?" Charn yelled in absolute rage, if he were a human his face would have been dark red and contorted, none of his men had the answer he was looking for; no matter he would just take his anger out on the crew of the disabled ship, the final escort finally died in a beautiful fire ball but not before finishing off the Harsa's Might.

Charn assessed the damage quickly before he dealt with that last ship; he had lost three of his ships to two of theirs, granted they were older ships constructed before the exodus but it was still a hollow victory, his own ship had suffered minor damage; a few hull breaches caused by those missiles, he couldn't wait to get his hands on those, he might even make that ship his on after he had captured it and enslaved it's crew.

He looked over the scans of the ship and saw that only one hard point docking station had survived his initial barrage, he cursed his luck; it would be harder to board the ship if they could only board through one hard point station.

"Get us in nice and close, use that docking station there," he said highlighting it for his pilot, "get the boarding teams prepped and ready to get us a new ship,"

"Sir, I'm getting a power build-up from the damaged ship, but I don't know where it's going," the sensor operator informed him and Charn let out a small growl,

"Is it dangerous?" He asked and the operator seemed to stammer slightly before a single bullet smashed through his skull, "Stupid waste of space," Charn muttered before moving out of the bridge, he would lead the charge onto the disabled ship.

As the Devastator moved into position the only other Batarian ship the Spoils of War moved into position in front of the crippled shipâ€¦ a big mistake.

* * *

><p>0442.32hrs April 4**th**** 2586 Military Calendar- UNSC Light Frigate **_*Gorgon*_**-Scouting the Eridanus System-Bridge Log-Primary, Video, Spacial enhancement=True**

Shards of shadow proof plastic flew through the air on the bridge, Commander Jones hung limp in her chair and Lieutenant Commander Davis' body was nowhere to be seen along with Lieutenant Owens, a single emergency light burned and tinged everything blood red, the only stations active were; Nav, Comm and two winking lights on the otherwise static filled Weapons station.

2nd Lieutenant Walters regained conciseness and quickly check himself over, he had at least two cuts in his forehead which were bleeding along with a couple of broken fingers that had snapped back as he tried to stop himself from smashing into his console, he used the first aid kit near his station to splint his fingers, a difficult task while doing it one handed. He checked his console and saw that the MAC had fully charged and that the Archer missile pods were open,

"MAC is fully charged and Archer pods are hot and ready to go sir," He called out, waiting for his ordersâ€œ they never came, looking around he saw his Commander still strapped to her seat and then the rest of the motionless bridge crew, "Shit, shit, shit, shit, shit," he cursed as he unbuckled himself as quickly as possible to check on the crew, hopefully they weren't dead.

He sighed only Commander Jones and 2nd Lieutenant Pangilinan had survived and even then they were both unconscious and showed no sign of waking, he guessed it was pure luck that he had regained consciousness, he moved to the Comm station and quickly said,

"Any fire teams on decks four, five or six report to the bridge," he looked about once more taking the carnage in before quickly adding, "any crewman who can get to the bridge do so immediately,"

He looked back at his console and saw that one of the enemy ships was almost point blank with the _Gorgon_ 's MAC gun, he saw the opportunity and took it before firing however he gave warning to the crew,

"All hands Brace, Brace!" he slammed the MAC fire control and the result was instantaneous.

UNSC Light Frigate **_*Gorgon*_-Captains log-Audio-Transfer control codes enabled per MIL/JAG order TR-19248-P**

Commander Jones is incapacitated and Lieutenant Commander Davis is missing, presumed dead, the rest of the bridge crew are either incapacitated or dead. I 2nd Lieutenant Walter, Philip M. UNSC service number-00932-2093-PW do here by assume command of the UNSC Light Frigate _Gorgon_ and take responsibility of the actions detailed hence forth; Emergency bulkheads are in place on the bridge and the additional breaches on decks one through eight and eleven through fourteen have been contained, decks sixteen and seventeen have been evacuated and cannot be repaired.

The Shaw-Fujikawa drive is inoperable; the primary and secondary reactors are also inoperable, the firing of the MAC spiked the primary systems and radiation containment systems are in effect. Cole

Protocol has been enacted under UNSC priority order 098831A-1. We are dead in space and weapons are offline, the last enemy ship is attempting to board us but I have a planâ€¦ but I don't think the Admiralty will like it.

**End Captains log-UNSC **_*Gorgon*_

* * *

><p>Batarian Heavy Cruiser-_*Devastator-*_* Hard point docking bay A-2- 2153 Citadel Standard

Charn waited impatiently for the docking cradle to line up and secure itself to his new ship; he would kill every one of those blasted fuckers in the bridge himself and if there was a female he might make some use of her before killing her, those bastards had destroyed the Spoils of War as it moved in front of the crippled ship, on the plus side it had damaged itself by firing that MASSIVE cannon at point blank distance.

His fingers twitched on his gun, it was almost time, the docking collar was just about to finish connecting to the crumpled armour of the warship, when it did it automatically started to pressurise the boarding tunnel and then the doors slid open revealing the thirty meter walk into the ship.

He had expected gun fire to start peppering his forces the second the doors opened but there was silence, he moved forward slowly his gun at the ready and then he heard it, the sound of a rocket or in this case missile. Right at the edge of the tunnel, a large white tipped missile launched and headed straight for them, there was no time to react as the missile which only just fitted into the docking tube soared straight into Charn's armoured chest and propelled him back into his own ship where it detonated, killing him and every other member of his crew as the explosion ripped the Cruiser in two, the damaged reactors no longer able to be stabilised went critical and detonated as well.

The secondary explosions from the Devastators reactor blasted the Gorgon away and tumbling into space, the Gorgon had been smashed into a forty five degree angle away from the blast; this re-exposed every deck on the starboard side and sheared off its two meter armour plating like wet tissue paper.

* * *

><p>Exoscience lab-Goddess Sunrise-FTL en route to the Citadel-2153 Citadel Standard

Asri walked into the lab to find it mostly empty, she wasn't all that surprised as most crew members had finished their shifts, however it appeared that Ashona was still working, she was sat at one of the many desks that cluttered the room, she appeared to be writing something down with an actual pen, but this was to be expected as she was trying to decipher an alien language, even with V.I support it was a long and daunting task,

"Might I inquire as to what it is you are doing Ashona?" Asri asked as she neared the younger scientist,

Ashona jumped in surprise and turned to face the Captain, her cheeks flushed from embarrassed at being caught unaware,

"C-captain, I- I was attempting to translate some of the alien language, so far though I haven't had much success, most of it appears to be numbers running on a base ten system like we do but even so I don't recognise any of the math used in the equations, i-it's incredible the way they came up with a math proof even we haven't come across yet," Ashona stammered as she showed Asri the what she had so far and Asri had to agree it was far more complicated than anything she had ever seen before exceptâ€!

"This bit here," Asri circled a section of the equation, "it looks a bit like an FTL jump coordination equation only far more complex," Ashona blushed again, '_How had she missed that?_'

"I-I didn't see that," she murmured,

"Not to worry, we all make mistakes, now why don't you get some rest and tomorrow I want you to try and get the translation software to get to work on that vid file you found ok?" Asri calmed her down before sending her on her way, Ashona hesitated by the door and Asri sighed,

"What is it Ashona?" Asri asked, and Ashona looked away and blushed,

"I-it's just I was wondering wh-why are we actually exploring this section of space," she was so scared she thought she would die, Asri just looked at her for a moment unregistering, before replying,

"Y-you haven't read the brief?" Ashona shook her head, "Well as you know Council space is getting crowded, that along with the lack of garden worlds in know space and the fact that the Krogan destroyed several during the Rebellions and then the Batarians following suit during the purge of 2092. Now the Matriarchs have been trying to convince the Council for centuries to allow an expedition into the Orion arm due to the higher than average amount of stars here and if there are more stars there is higher chance ofâ€!" Asri trailed off, hoping that Ashona would get it,

"Garden worlds!" Ashona nearly yelled, Asri nodded,

"Indeed, now go get some rest." Asri finished and pointed to the door which Ashona quickly retreated through off to her own quarters, Asri returned to her quarters soon after and started compiling the report for the Council, the sooner it was out of the way the better.

* * *

><p>Office of Naval Intelligence outpost Trevelyan-Forerunner city-April 7**th**** 2586**

The Librarian sighed once again, she had been revived by the Sangheili, Jul 'Mdama who then had the audacity to bow before her and beg for the knowledge she held just so he could wipe out _Humanity, _the poor fool had been misled for so long that he couldn't see the truth even when it was right in front of him.

Then the Humans came to rescue their scientist and by extension her, the Spartans as they were called were indeed very formidable worriers and she wondered just how much the Humans had changed thanks to her 'meddling' and from what she had seen they had changed so much, they had a new form of government, a new military structure and most importantly they had new ideals.

They weren't out to conquer everything in their path instead they sought peace, unfortunately though they were still as violent as ever if not even more so, but what do you expect when you find out everything you thought you knew about your own past was nothing but a fraction of it and then of course there was the 'Covenant', a coalition of races founded on lies and deceit saying that the detonation of the Halo array would take them on a 'Great Journey', it was disheartening to see all she had worked for fall to pieces like that although Humanity came out on top once again.

But what worried her at the present was the current state of affairs in what was left of Human space, their own civilians were starting to rebel, again and the reappearance of an old faction of rebels, the URF, had the Human military at near breaking point, just two Earth days ago one of their scouting teams got ambushed and was nearly destroyed and if it wasn't for the quick thinking of aâ€| what was the Human term?... ahh yes Lieutenant, if it wasn't for the Lieutenant then they would have been boarded.

But something else was amiss as wellâ€| where were all the other races she had catalogued?

* * *

><p>AN: So, what is everyone's obsession with making the Turians the bad guys? Also I did mention something that sounds like the Relay 314 incident, but do not mistake this as the Systems Alliance, they don't exist, also ONI will not be the cause of Cerberus, I'll leave you to guess who is.**

Also if you don't think what happens to the **Gorgon is realistic than I suggest you read up on the Callisto incident, it isn't the same but it's pretty close. Now the Wreck mentioned in the first chapter was a UNSC Destroyer, if you read the bit in bold above it you would know that, so a UNSC Destroyer is around 550-600 meters long, that is a Cruiser by Citadel Ship standards. Also what i mean by the Exodus for the Batarians will be sorted next chapter.**

**I think that's everything so I'll see you after the weekend and a happy "end of the world." **

3. Chapter 3

A/N; MERRY CHRISTMAS! Now i would like to mention something about this chapter first, it's important; Right it is slightly shorter but it is informative, its 'good' but i'm not sure how realistic it is, i'll leave it up to you so read and enjoy.

Answers to some questions will be at the bottom,

Disclaimer- I OWN NOTHING! except OCs.

* * *

><p>"Why do we bother to force unhappy colony worlds to stay in the UN fold? Because UNSC budgets and UNSC heavy lift enabled those colonies to exist. Because the UNSC needs as many supply bases in deep space as it can get and because they're Human- they're us. In a galaxy full of hostile aliens, you're either for us, or you're the enemy. â€"Admiral Margaret O. Parangosky, CINCONI

* * *

><p>Medical bay-UNSC Marathon Heavy Cruiser Mk II-UNSC
**Ripper****-Slip-Space en Route to Sol System-April
18****th**** 2586**

Beep, beep, beep, beepâ€|

Philip Walters slowly came about; the humming of the Rippers engines could still be heard over the sounds of medical equipment he was plugged into, he started to move until a hand on his shoulder stopped him,

"Careful there laddie, we wouldn't want to go tearing all your stitches now would we?" a young man with short black hair and a large hooked nose said, a slight Irish brogue coming through,

"Stitches? What stitches?" Walters croaked out, he tried to move again but the medical officer held him down again,

"You took one nasty beating after that stunt you pulled; the cut above your eye had to be stitched along with several large lacerations caused by the debris in the bridge, we also had to replace several internal organs, your heart, liver, pancreas, kidneys and your left lung, we also had to reset a couple of bones, you're lucky the medical crew checked in on you after wards or you would have been another casualty."

"I should have died, it would probably have been better than what the brass is gonna do to me for doing that." Philip groaned,

"I don't know about that Lieutenant, look what happened to Cole when he did almost the exact same thing, now try not to move too much we'll be arriving at Earth in about a week, I'm going to tell the Admiral you're awake, he'll want to debrief you himself before HIGHCOM get a hold of you, after all it was his men that were killed," the officer seemed to aim that last part at Walters, he had known the explosion would damage the ship and possibly injure some crew members but the reactors on that ship, something wasn't rightâ€| they shouldn't have gone up like that so, why did they?

"What about the Commander and Lieutenant Pangilinan?" Philip questioned and the Medical officer's eyes shifted to another bed, Philip followed his gaze and saw on a bed next to him was the Commander, her neck secured in a brace and multiple tubes and wires stuck out of her,

"She's in a coma, she'll be lucky if she ever wakes up and Lieutenant Pangilinan didn't make it, he died before the Ripper arrived in system." Philip looked away and closed his eyes, his best friend was dead and his CO was in a coma and wasn't likely to wake up anytime

soon, it was his fault, if he had been faster, if he hadn't been so stupid then AJ would have survived and so would have a lot of other people but no he had failed, if he had gotten those shields online none of that would have happened. Maybe he should have listened to his mother and he should have stayed in university, not drop out and join the Navy.

"Thanks Doc," Philip offered the small thank you with little meaning behind his words,

"Oh I'm not a Doctor, I'm a medical technician," the Medical tech replied,

"Whatever, same thing." Philip replied before shutting his eyes properly, ending the conversation.

* * *

><p>Serpent Nebula-Citadel-Citadel Tower-Council meeting room-2153 Citadel Standard

Sparatus, the Turian representative on the council looked at the report, granted the writer of the report was stood before him but he would rather read the report first and then talk to the Asari Captain, Asri N'lorik. The file had been transmitted to him along with the rest of the council several days ago and he had read it so many times he had nearly memorised it. The report wasâ€¦ interesting, it stated that the wreck had been drifting in space for a little over eighty years, before the Verge wars, the main gun on the wreckage was predicted to fire a 300 ton slug but at what speed was still a mystery, the computer systems were highly advanced and took the team nearly a week of solid hacking to get at the data, only to find that petabytes of data had been corrupted beyond recovery.

Some of the data that had been recovered was either entirely composed of text or was a series of mathematical equations that were beyond even the Salarians, there had been a video and audio file but they couldn't understand what was being said, it was interesting though as it showed the final few hours of the ships operational life and the way it ended, with a bright light passing near the bridge, blocking everything with a thick white heat, when the lighted faded the ship shook and the feed cut after that.

"Captain," he began, "I'm sure you're wondering why exactly your expedition was pulled back, granted it was technically an illegal exploration mission but that isn't the reason, no the Salarian STG as well as several Spectre's had discovered some ratherâ€¦ disturbing evidence." Sparatus motioned for the Salarian representative, Valern, to take over,

"Several STG operations discovered a large influx of weapons and slaves to Omega, the weapons were not of any known design and fired actual bullets, not mass effect based, the slaves were your average Batarian that didn't follow the rules, when a Turian patrol raided a slaver ship, inside were a race of mammalian bipeds that had never been encountered before, it is the same race that operated the ship you found," Valern started listing out some of the details, "The slaves were freed and brought back here to the Citadel and are currently with C-sec for protection, when the Turian patrol hacked the ships system, they had located where the shipment came fromâ€¦"

the Orion arm, unfortunately however the exact route used is still a mystery meaning we can't just send in a fleet and wipe the slavers out. " Valern finished and Ari was in shock, someone had been transporting slaves from a civilisation that was completely unknown to the Council not only that they were also selling off the species' weaponry, it was sickening.

"Not only that but recent evidence collected by one of our top agents had uncovered evidence that Edan Had'dah is not only alive but has been operating the entire operation from an unknown location, we are building up our forces to try and locate him but it will take some time to organise everything along with gathering the Intel on the whereabouts of the Mass Relay he used to escape," Counsellor Tevos, the Asari representative,

"What makes you think he used a Mass Relay? He might have done what we did and used conventional FTL travel to escape, if your intelligence is indeed correct," Asri replied, the knowledge that Edan could still be alive angered her, the bastard had lied and had manipulated her, made her feel guilty for anything he saw as wrong and when the time came he had left her to sift through the remains of their life,

"Our intelligence is of top quality, I assure you, some of the intelligence gathered pertains to a 'relay 314', that however it is all we know," Valern retorted, "full mobilisation for the fleet will take approximately seven months, how long it takes to find the Relay however is another matter, it could be just a matter of weeks or it could be over a year before we find the relay or any information on its whereabouts." Sparatus finished, Asri was dismissed soon after as she was not needed for the rest of the meeting, not that she cared, politics was not her idea of a fun time plus she at least now knew why her expedition had been called back.

As she walked through the Presidium towards her hotel she made a mental note to ask why the Council had made such revelations to her of all people, by the Goddess it was only two decades ago when she had stopped being asked about her time spent with Edan and she stopped being a suspect in the investigations which were still going.

* * *

><p>Omega wing, UNSC Bravo-6, UNSC HIGHCOM, Sydney, Australia, 0900hrs, March 1, 2586

Dressed in his dress uniform 2nd Lieutenant Philip Walters waited, he sat in a chair in a large and empty waiting area, the drab grey walls left were so dull and boring they had somehow managed to make the black inkiness of Slip-space look incredibly attractive, he didn't know how just that they did.

His left arm was in a sling and caste; his forearm had been crushed as one of the heavy wall panels in the bridge was blasted free and hit him, he had several broken ribs and it hurt just breathing in and out but he kept the blank emotionless face he had kept for the last two weeks. His usually bright deep blue eyes were dull and had lost the spark that was in every Lieutenant who had never served in real combat, hell he hadn't really, but they had never committed an action that had saved the lives of nearly four hundred crewmen but at the

cost of over six dozen lives including his best friends' life.

The room well dull and uninteresting did have two sets of double doors, one was the way had come in through, the other was a large wooden door with brass handles with gold plating, when it opened revealing Admiral Jack Newman in his pristine uniform, the two stars seemed to sparkle slightly and the campaign medals gave the black dress uniform a large variety of colour and the medals he had been awarded hung proudly on his chest, Philip went to get up and salute but the Admiral waved a hand and shook his head,

"No need Lieutenant, be warned the brass are looking for a head to stick on a pike for this, you should be in the clear seeing as though you followed protocol to the letter but a single cock up in there and chances are ONI will have you in some deep dark hole," the Admiral warned as he walked over to where Philip was sat and offering a dark skinned hand, Philip took the assistance,

"Thank you sir,"

"No problem Lieutenant, as I said, you should be fine, I mean Cole pulled nearly the exact same trick on an Insurrectionist vessel and they promoted him to Commander before the year was up, hell they nearly gave him the Legion of Honour, they also nearly court marshalled him so it could go either way but Lasky was supportive of your actions, so at least that's something." Jack finished as an MP came in and asked for Philip Walters, the Admiral patted him on his good shoulder and wished him luck.

Philip followed the MP through the door and down a long dark corridor; it was eerie, like he was walking to his own execution and as the Admiral put it if he cocked up than he was walking to his own execution.

He was led to a plain simple door and led inside the room, inside were the four most powerful people in the UNSC Navy; Fleet Admiral Lord Terrance hood, Fleet Admiral Keith Harper, Admiral Thomas Lasky and Rear Admiral Serin Osman, their faces were blank and didn't betray any thoughts of the current situation and Philip swallowed as he stood at attention in front of the large oak wood table they were sat behind.

"Sate your name and rank for record please," Lord Hood started, his old wrinkled face still gave away nothing and neither did his voice,

"2nd Lieutenant Philip Michael Walters UNSC service number-00932-2093-PW, Sir!" he called out with as much professionalism as he could muster,

"Good, now Lieutenant we've all read the report and what we saw was the actions of a hero who saved his ship and the crew of that ship," Admiral Lasky stated with a tiny hint of a smile,

"Yes at the cost of seventy two people and you nearly destroyed the Gorgon with your reckless actions," Osman retorted as she glared at Philip with murderous eyes,

"Serin, we've already discussed this, he followed protocol to the letter, saved the majority of the crew and he prevented the Gorgon

from falling into enemy hands," Harper snapped, if Philip were to guess then he would have said that the brass had had several long winded arguments over his actions it didn't settle his nerves at all to see at least two Admirals support his actions,

"What do you have to say about what happened Lieutenant?" Hood asked, Philip swallowed again before answering,

"Sir, I already gave my view on what happened in the report," Philip said, he was starting to sweat from his nervousness,

"I know that Lieutenant, I just want you to tell me face to face what you did," Hood replied,

"Y-yes sir, after regaining consciousness I quickly called out the status of the weapons systems, after getting no orders I turned round to see Commander Jones limp in her chair, I also looked at the rest of the bridge crew and saw that they were all hunched over their stations, I checked on the bridge crew to find that only Commander Jones and Lieutenant Pangilinan were still alive, I called for any available fire teams and any available crewman to report to the bridge. Afterwards I looked to see one of the enemy vessels had taken up a position in front of the Gorgon's MAC, I told the crew to brace and fired the MAC, the resulting explosion shifted the Gorgon and I could see another enemy vessel that had tried to get into position next to the Gorgon, I then used the Captains log to make a basic report of what happened, after that I checked to see what hard point docking stations had survived the initial attack, only the port docking point was intact so I called for several crewman to take one of the Archer missiles out of its pod and line it up with the docking point," Philip took a deep breath before continuing, "when the doors opened I waited to make sure the missile would fly into the enemy vessel unobstructed, than I fired the missile, the explosion from the enemy ships reactors knocked me out sir, the next thing I know I was in the Med bay of the Ripper already heading back to Earth." Philip finished and his throat was dry and sore, his uniform was damp from sweat and his knees were shaking, the Admirals looked at him for a moment and then Admiral Lasky asked,

"Why did you active the Cole protocol Lieutenant? After all it's now moot seeing as the URF and the Covenant know the location of Earth," his tone was a mixture of condescending and curiosity,

"I didn't believe that the URF or any Covenant species were attacking us sir," Philip answered, defending his actions,

"Well who else could it have been Lieutenant? Do you think that it was first contact with a new race that decided it liked your ship?" Admiral Osman sneered, her voice filled with doubt and distaste,

"I don't know who it was sir, but I didn't recognise the ship design and assumed that they were neither part of the URF or the Covenant," Philip replied,

"You assumed? Assumed?" Osman was nearly yelling, "So you enacted a protocol that hasn't been needed in over thirty years because you assumed?"

"Admiral that is enough, Lieutenant Walters followed the correct course of action in the situation, if anything he deserves a medal

for his actions not to be told that he was at fault," Hood glared at the younger woman

The debriefing carried on for at least another hour if not more before he was dismissed and made his way out of the HIGHCOM underground complex, he stood there in the Australian sun, the small breeze had a slightly bitter feel to it after all it was coming up to the Australian winter. He ended up in a hotel not far from the Bravo-6 compound where he spent the day and then night, until further notice he was to stay near Bravo-6, ready to head there at the drop of a hat, he had no idea what to do with himself, maybe he'd go see Liam, he lived around here somewhere, didn't he?

* * *

><p>Today people are in mourning as even more civilians are killed throughout UNSC and UEG space by Insurrectionist bombings and attacks, bombs were detonated in several cities on Earth, Mars and Circumstance. Major attacks on embassy's, Shopping centres and other densely populated areas, Insurrectionist forces have so far killed hundreds of thousands to get free of a government they have abandoned them. Riots all around UNSC space have broken out to 'End the bloodshed against ourselves once and for all,' as the attacks grow more violent.</p>

Also a UNSC scouting group consisting of two Corvettes, the Jericho and Petra, along with a light Frigate, the Gorgon, led by Naval Commander Katlin Jones was attacked and nearly destroyed by unknown forces that are presumed to be old United Rebel Front personnel, if it weren't for the quick thinking and actions of a 2bd Lieutenant Philip Walters, the Gorgon would have been boarded and presumably killed. A UNSC Naval Spokesperson had this to say,

"The Navy is truly sorry for the families of those that had lost their lives, but if it wasn't for the actions of 2nd Lieutenant Walters than many more families would be grieving and the UNSC would have lost one of their most historic vessels."

(WAYPOINT NINE NEWS UPDATE, MARCH 6th 2586)

* * *

><p>AN- Right so some of the questions that have been asked and there answers;

'What is the status of the former Covenant Species?'
byScottus1:

Answer; Well as we all know the Covenant split, the Brutes have disappeared from known space, the Grunts are staying to their home planet, trying to rebuild the ecosystem and to advance into space on their own terms-with some help from the Reclaimers, The Jackals tend to stay in their own space but its not uncommon to find them on human worlds that are part of the Insurrection or have been glassed, the Hunters tend to stick their own world but some have joined the Sangheili in combat. now the Sangheili as you know they made an alliance with Humanity, some split off and formed the Storm, others supported the alliance, but when they find out what ONI did they were too weakened to go to war but they cut off nearly all contact with Humanity, the Arbiter and his closest friends/allies still keep in

touch but only on important issues.

'Please tell me that the Asari will not become Reclaimers alongside the Humans' by ferduran

Answer-God NO! thats OUR title and responsibility, fuck them.

Also- guest- I know a UNSC Destroyer has two MAC guns but only the 'newer' ones, some Destroyer classes only hd one back in the day.

Right so than here you go, Merry Christmas and if i don't update by Thursday wish me a Happy Birthday as i turn 18 so i can legally go out and drink! :)

4. Chapter 4

A/N; So, something short and important before the next chapter, it details events for... well i'll let you read and find out. i know this is very short compared to the last chapters but it is important or otherwise the next chapter wont make sense. i'll make it up to you i promise as the next chapter will be a long one... i think.

I would like to point out however that im working this weekend and that i go down to see my grandparents next week, but i'll be working on the story still.

* * *

><p>Philip Walters was promoted to full Lieutenant and awarded the Legion of Honour, after serving for several tours as the XO of a Corvette he was promoted to Commander; this however wasn't done without protest from several high ranking officials in the Navy. His first Command would be the UNSC Destroyer Sevenfold, one of the new _Inheritance _Class Destroyers.

Armed with a single bow energy projector and two Heavy MACs capable of firing three 600 ton slugs at 30,000 meters per second, each, 30 M42 Archer missile pods, 20 AAA Helix Guns and 10 70mm point defence cannons made the _Sevenfold_ one of the most deadly ships in space, protected by advanced shielding and two meters of Titanium-A3 Battle plate made it able to take as much as she gave. His first tour of duty as the Commander of the _Sevenfold_ will be under the _Infinity_ and Admiral Lasky in late summer of 2587.

Over the course of the next year and four months The Office of Naval Intelligence sent multiple prowlers to scout out dozens of systems in search of the forces that attacked the Gorgon and her escorts, no evidence was found in any system until August 14th 2587 when the ONI prowler Midnight arrived in the Shanxi-Theta system to find the Colony of Shanxi orbited by nearly seven Hundred ships, granted most were Corvette profiles or Frigate profiles with four Cruisers mixed in with the large fleet. Under cloak the Midnight surveyed the planet to find that an unknown group of aliens had captured the planet relatively intact as the UNSC thought it was destroyed by the Covenant at the start of the war.

The colonists had either been killed or enslaved and the Capital city along with the orbital tethers had been occupied by the enemy forces.

The Midnight returned to the newly rebuilt HIGHCOM facility in New Alexandria on Reach to report their findings. Afterwards NAVCOM immediately started organising a fleet led by Admiral Lasky on board the Infinity. The fleet would compose of nearly 600 ships of the line, the largest fleet in recorded Human history.

Admiral Lasky personally visited the Forerunner remnants on Trevelyan to ask for help from the Warrior-Servants that had survived, led by the last organic Promethean; the Grammarian. He agreed to send some picket Cruisers and four Dreadnought class vessels along with some of his most trusted Warrior-Servants. The total amount of ships participating in the battle would be 630 warships.

The Ground assault would be led by Major General Nicolas Strauss. The fleet rendezvoused at an old abandoned ONI 'deep space' observation outpost located on a moon of a gas giant at the very edge of pre-war UNSC space.

* * *

><p>The Citadel Council spent the time organising a fleet of two hundred ships from the Asari Republics, Salarian Union and Turian Hierarchy, the latter of which supplying the bulk of military forces, the amount of ships being organised hadn't been seen since the Krogan Rebellions. The Salarian STG and Council Spectres spent the time working to find the location of the relay needed to get into the Orion arm easily; the Council even tasked archaeologists to scour through Prothean ruins for information on Relay locations. Eventually the efforts paid off when a newly appointed Spectre, Saren Arterius, discovers the information from a Batarian Freighter Captain that he caught smuggling resources from a previously unknown location.<p>

The fleet would be led by General Septimus Oraka with General Desolas Arterius leading the planetary assault, the fleet was organised over Palaven before deploying, they arrived at the location without incident and were preparing to leave to attack the Batarian menace to end it once and for all.

5. Chapter 5

A/N; Got this up sooner than expected, enjoy!

Disclaimer; i own nothing

Thanks to all that wished me a happy B-day and a merry Christmas

* * *

><p>Philip Walters sat on the grass next to the small stone protrusion, there were hundreds of them organised into neat rows and columns and each one had a different engraving on it and the one he was sat next to simply read; Rear Admiral John Newman; A leader and a father. His mum had already divorced his dad and remarried by the time of his death some twenty years ago. His father always made the effort to see him when he could butâ€| the life of a Naval Officer is a busy one and it left very little time for family.

"Soâ€œ! Hey dad, it's been a while since I last came to see you. Sorry about that but i-uhh I got involved in a situation a little over a year ago and my lord you not believe what I had to doâ€œ! actually you probably do, I mean after all you served during the 'Great war', hell you met _the_ _Admiral Cole_, but the brass sorta just gave me a medal and a promotion and told me not to play hero too much." Philip paused as if waiting for his father to say something but he was greeted with silence,

"I got my own ship now, I haven't seen her yet though, apparently she's a real beauty, from the specs I've seen she's fast, agile and has a proper knockout punch butâ€œ! I-I don't knowâ€œ! I mean I'm not even thirty yet and I have my own ship, yeah I know I turn thirty next month but still, most officers aren't even thirty five when they get their own ship, am I really ready for this? I'm trying not to think about it too much." Philip took yet another breath before continuing,

"Speaking of girls with a knockout punchâ€œ! I met someone, she's an absolute badass, seriously I saw her K.O a Marine that got a bit too touchy feely, poor kid never knew what hit him. But I asked her out, granted I was protecting my nuts the entire time but I still asked and to my surprise she said yes. Can you believe itâ€œ! me, I got a date? I know crazy huh? But ahhâ€œ! she's a mechanic and a damn good one. You would've liked her; I mean I asked her out nearly a year ago now and everything's going all right for once." Philip explained with a smile on his face, he looked at his watch to see that he would have to go now if he were to make to the spaceport on time,

"I gotta go now dad, I'll come back to see you soon I promise, justâ€œ! wish me luck so I don't fuck up major out there." Philip said before getting up to leave, he cast one last look at his father's grave before leaving.

* * *

><p>"No! Don't go daddy!" the little girl cried out, David sighed at the sight of the little five year old girl clinging to his leg begging him not to leave,</p>

"Meredith, I have to go, you know this, daddy has to go fight the bad guys, to protect you and mummy," David really hated leaving home, leaving his wife and daughter to go fight Insurrectionists, people who would happily bomb a school if given the chance, they feel they have the right to be free of the United Earth Government and the UNSC because the UNSC were busy saving their ungrateful asses.

"I don't want you to go!" Meredith started crying and clung even tighter to his leg,

"Emilie! I could use a hand here!" David called out to his wife, he might not be able to deal with a crying five year old but his wife could,

"Nah-ah, you have to deal with all by yourself mister hard core ODST," was the reply from the doorway into their kitchen,

"Oh come on! That's not fair! You know I can't say no to Meredith!" David whined as his daughter clung even tighter to his leg, starting

to cut off the blood supply to his foot,

"Tough, you're the one that's leaving, you deal with her, she got her stubbornness from you, you know," David groaned at his wife's reply,

"Right okay come her munchkin," David reached down and had to forcibly remove her from his leg, he picked the small child up whom then immediately threw her arms around his neck all the while still begging him not to leave her,

"Meredith," David tried to get her attention, "Meredith look at me sweetie," he tried again with a little bit more success, her large soft brown eyes looked at him, they glimmered from the light reflecting off of the tears in her eyes, "Look, sweetie, you know I don't want to leave you but I have to go, daddy's got an important mission to do," David tried to tell her but she just started crying again,

"Look, how about when I get back we go on a nice little holiday together, just you, mummy and I, huh, how does that sound, I'll take you somewhere, anywhere you want to go, you find the place and I'll organise it, okay?" David tried bargaining with her,

"Promise?" she asked in a small, delicate voice,

"Pinkie promise," David held out his smallest finger for her, she wrapped her little finger round his,

"Just, come home daddy," she whispered softly, barely loud enough for him to hear,

"I will and then I'll take you on that holiday I promised," David whispered back, he looked up to see his wife stood by the kitchen door with a smile on her face, a small sad smile that showed she understood that he was leaving, David gave Meredith a tight hug before setting her down again and picking up his bags, he walked over to Emilie and held her tight,

"I don't want to go, you know, I'm thinking of getting a security posting here on Earth, somewhere nice and safe," he told her,

"Good, I'd kick your arse if you decided to stay out in the front lines," she told him,

"I know." He kissed her before letting go; he lent down and kissed his daughter, his precious little angel, before heading towards the door and leaving. Leaving his daughter and wife as he went to go fight on a world far away from home against an enemy he didn't know existed.

* * *

><p>Orbit over Palaven, heart of the joint fleet, Flagship Indomitable, CIC, 2154 Citadel Standard

General Septimus Oraka was a distinguished officer within the Hierarchy, he had fought Krogan, Batarians, pirates and all sorts of other undesirables that the galaxy had thrown at him and he always came out on top. That was why he was chosen to lead the joint fleet

against the Batarians and that bastard Edan; he personally looked forward to watching Edan's flagship burn.

The fleet was still gathering around his ship, the Indomitable, one of the Hierarchy's most powerful Dreadnoughts ever put into service, at 1.2 km long she was the second largest ship in the known galaxy and has the most powerful main gun ever created by Turians, it had one of the most sophisticated GARDIAN laser suites available and had enough broadside guns to rival a small fleet.

One of the Ensigns walked up to him to hand him a data-pad, he looked at the information displayed before letting out a satisfied grunt,

"Have all ships form up on the Indomitable and to prepare for immediate departure." He ordered, a figure walked up to him and stood next him,

"Once more unto the breach," the Turian next him said, Septimus nodded in agreement,

"Indeed it is Desolas, two hundred ships to take out that bastard Edan, he should be honoured, this many ships in one battle hasn't been seen since the Krogan Rebellions," Septimus replied,

"Yes, what he did wasâ€| disgusting, and now he's gone and enslaved a new race, will his madness ever end?" Desolas queried,

"I fear that his madness won't end until either he's dead or when the Batarians are the number one species in the galaxy, and you know which one would be more preferable." Septimus replied sadly.

* * *

><p>UNSC Orbital Defence Ring, Reach, Epsilon Eridani, August 20**th**** 2587**

Commander Philip Walter stood by one of many observation windows on the massive orbital ring over Reach, it was still under construction and wasn't due to finish until the turn of the century, the ring itself wrapped all the way around the planet, millions of missile pods, point defence guns, anti-fighter missile pods, anti-ship weapons ranging from small mass drivers to the large MK7 Super Mass Accelerator Cannons, in theory it would prevent Reach from falling to enemy hands again, but it was exactly that, a theory. Other than being a massive weapons platform it acted as the primary naval yard, while the side facing away from the planet was made up of incredibly thick armour plating and weapon systems the side facing the planet was in essence a large ship building facility.

The observation window he was looking through was mostly obstructed by deadly angular form the Inheritance Class Destroyer known as the Sevenfold, he could just about see one of the massive towers that would act as a massive shield, protecting the planet from any hostile invaders. He could see the name plate of the ship that was his. He had his own ship, it was a great responsibility he wasn't sure he was ready for, but when an Admiral tells you that you can do it, it's a confidence boost.

He heard the sound of foot steps behind him but he didn't bother to

turn around until he heard Lasky's old, withered voice,

"She's a beauty isn't she?" the Admiral asked as he came to a stop next the Commander,

"Yeah she is, I just don't understand why I'm in charge of her," Philip replied softly, not expecting a real reply,

"I wasn't on about the ship but if that what you want to talk aboutâ€| you're in charge of her because we have faith in you, the type of thinking you displayed during your encounter on the Gorgon hasn't been seen since Admiral Cole did the same damn thing, hell I doubt even Keys could have pulled that off, granted he probably would have found a way to win anyway though." Lasky answered, it was the same damn reply he had gotten every other time he had asked since finding out, he always got the same answer; 'We have faith in you' be that as it may he still wanted to knowâ€|

"Why? Why do you have so much faith in me sir?" Philip asked, Lasky let out a small sigh before answering,

"Simple; the Navy needs a figure head, it's all well and good using an aged war veteran to promote the Navy but you? You presented a whole new area that we could use to get more recruits, Commander Philip Walters, Hero aboard the Gorgon, hell the fact that you were an average nobody before joining the Navy was a serious boost to the propaganda, 'if he can do it so can you', type slogans appeared the next day. If we keep you in the limelight you'll be this generation's version of Preston Cole," Lasky informed him, he had guessed it was purely for propaganda but to hear about it from an Admiralâ€| he didn't know what to think,

"Sir, permission to speak freely?" Philip asked, it was better safe than sorry,

"Of course," Lasky replied,

"I never joined the Navy to be a figure head like that, I don't want to be some hero that people think is some sort of genius, I simply joined because it's what my father did and it'll be what I do and when I have children I expect them to do the same," Philip told the Admiral, it was true, the only reason he had ever joined was to do his father and his family proud.

"A lot of people joined for that reason Walters, but you're the only one that's actually worth it. Now you might want to get on board, you've got some trial runs to complete before hitting the rendezvous, wouldn't want our poster boy to miss the action." Lasky told him before walking off leaving Walters with the small paper photo of his girlfriend, the one he mentioned to his father, he glanced once more out the viewport and left, heading towards the docking point with a new bounce in his step and smile on his face, he would take the Sevenfold on her trial runs and then meet the rest of the fleet at the ONI base and then kick the arses of the bastards that dared to enslave one of Humanities colonies and attack their ships, he was determined to show those alien dirt bags why Humanity held the Mantle of responsibility and no one else held it with them.

* * *

><p>Flagship _**Indomitable**_**, Relay 314, 2154
Citadel Standard**

General Septimus Oraka stood at the centre of the CIC of the Indomitable, looking over the Status of the joint fleet; they were just about ready to go as the last of the ships discharged their cores and topped up on supplies. A young Ensign walked up to him,

"All ships just about ready sir, just waiting on the Nefrane now," the Ensign reported and Septimus nodded,

"Good, as soon as the Nefrane ready have the fleet move through the relay, no point in waiting around, Edan isn't going to kill himselfâ€¦ unfortunately." Oraka instructed as he walked round to the large holographic display at the centre of the CIC,

"Yes sir," the Ensign acknowledged before going off to fulfil his duties.

* * *

><p>UNSC _**Sevenfold**_**, Slip-space en route to rendezvous point, September 5****th**** 2587**

Commander Walters was looking over the workstations dotted around the large bridge of the Sevenfold, it was larger than the ones on the older Gorgon-class Destroyers but it felt more cramped, probably because the bridge was located near the back and surrounded by two and half meters of Titanium-A3 armour, the view screen at the front showed an armoured lip covering the bridge, to him it felt like he was in some high-tech cave with the entrance covered by super hardened plastic.

The Lieutenants were manning their stations flanked by at least two Ensigns as assistants, but from what he had seen the Lieutenants were more than capable of doing the work alone. His XO stood to his side, his back straight and arms folded behind his back, if Philip didn't know otherwise he would have thought the man was the epitome of military perfection but he had seen his First Officers record and it wasn't pretty, in fact Philip was surprised that the man was still in the Navy. He had been demoted several times, arrested several times for either attempted mutiny or usurping a superior officer's order, Philip was sure he should have been Court marshalled by now but Philip guessed that someone higher up the ladder was keeping him out of jail.

Walters also knew that his XO was not impressed when a thirty year old got command over him; in fact Lieutenant Commander Skye was pissed at the idea of losing out on command of one of the finest vessels produced by the UNSC. Skye seemed to just pass by what is expected of him, one slip up however and Walters would have the man off of his ship in a hart beat, preferably via the airlock.

The ship shuddered slightly and the lights on the bridge cut out and several alarms blared, Sky had to grab hold of the brass railing in front of him, '_Shit, not again, please God not again,'_ Philip prayed to himself,

"Report!" he demanded; Lieutenants were working furiously to find out

what happened, where they were andâ€| "Where is Lorelie?" the _Sevenfolds _A.I had yet to make an appearance since the malfunction,

"Sir, Lorelie isn't responding to any prompts, she might have shut down for a systems check," Lieutenant Helen Vickers reported from the Comm station, "Sir, Engineering is reporting a glitch in the Slip-space drive, and they say they'll have it fixed in less than an hour,"

"Holy fuck," Philip sighed a sigh of relief, "tell engineering to fix the drive ASAP and once Lorelie is back up and running let me know," Philip ordered, "Get on the horn with Admiral Lasky and let him know we're going to be a little bit late to the party,"

"Uhhâ€| sir? I'm picking up a gravitational anomaly at the edge of our scanner range, whatever it is it's messing with space-time in its immediate area," 2nd Lieutenant Mark Robson informed Philip from the Sensor station,

"Shit, Robson shut the alarm off, Vickers tell the Admiral of theâ€|

"SIR! Multiple contacts appearing by the anomaly!" Robson shouted in alarm, typing away with a renewed vigour to get as much information as possible out of the scanners,

"How many?" Philip demanded, if it was those bastards that had attacked the _Gorgon_ and enslaved the colony than chances were that he would need the Slip-space drive, now.

"T-two hundred sir, I'm picking positive contact on two hundred vessels of unknown origin,"

"Fuck! Skye, get down to engineering and get that drive fixed," Philip was about to continue but Skye interrupted him,

"With all due respect sir, Lieutenant Vickers is capable of informing engineering of our problem," Skye rebutted the order,

"Damn it Skye get your ass down to engineering now! I need Vickers to get Admiral Lasky on the Comms, not to be bogged down telling the men in engineering to fix the drive, so MOVE IT!" Philip stood up to his full height, a full head taller than Skye and yelled at the most pathetic excuse for an officer in the UNSC, Skye narrowed his eyes and straightened up but said nothing as he left the bridge,

"Vickers where the hell is the Comm link?" Philip asked, to her credit Helen was working so hard she had started to sweat, her uniform was slowly growing damp,

"Got it!" she yelled in triumph almost straight after Admiral Lasky's form appeared on the plinth next to his chair where Lorelie would normally appear,

"What's the emergency Walters?" the Admiral asked,

"Sir, our Slip-space drive glitched out on us and two hundred contacts have appeared on our long range scanners, so far they

haven't acknowledged seeing us, they're just sitting by some sort of gravitational anomaly they appeared next to," Philip reported, Lasky looked thoughtful for a moment,

"Damn it, Walters you are both the luckiest and _un_luckiest officer in the Navy, hold tight I'm sending battle group _Daedalus _to reinforce you, try and avoid anyâ€!"

"Sir! The unknown fleet is trying to hail us!" Vickers interrupted,

"â€|Contact, damn it, Walters I am here by ordering you to answer those hails, try to appear as nonthreatening as possible, the _Daedalus_ will be there within the hourâ€| good luck Commander," Lasky amended his order, Philip sighed, hopefully Lorelie would reactivate soon to make things easier but the Admiral was right, he seemed to be at the centre of everything at the moment,

"You heard the Admiral Vickersâ€| open the channel," Philip ordered and he prayed it wouldn't be his last.

* * *

><p>SO? hope you enjoyed, see ya's next chapter ;)

WAIT! if you have a question PM me, don't review it because of the amount of times i've answered and you've not acknowledged it is annoying me, not all of you do it but still. NOW REVIEW!

6. Chapter 6

**A/N; so here we are, chapter six, my longest chapter to date, enjoy. **

Also i own nothing, the franchises belong to their respectful owners.

* * *

><p>Flagship _**Indomitable**_**, CIC, Other side of Relay 314, 2154 Citadel Standard**

Septimus Oraka watched as the holographic representations of his fleet come out from the relay and as a detailed scan of the surrounding space, this relay had apparently been knocked out of its home system for one reason or another, his bet was on a Super Nova. There were only a few systems within FTL range of the relay; he would send a couple of scouting flotilla's to scout them out andâ€|

"Sir! I'm picking up a single contact at the edge of our sensor range, it's an 89% profile match to the Cruiser the Asari expedition found," one of his Lieutenants reported, Septimus thought for a second,

'_Could this be the same race? No, it's only an 89% match on the profile, but if it is they might have changed the design over the years, the report did mention that the ships found was around eighty years old,'_ he was struggling for what he should do, if it was a

Batarian ship he would blow it out of existence but if it was belonging to the race that had built the ship Captain Asri and her crew had found he should try and contact them, he might not be able to talk to them but he can at least appear to be non-threatening.

"Lieutenant, what can you tell me about that ship?" Septimus asked, if it proved to be hostile than he wanted to know as much as he could about the ship,

"Not a lot from this range sir but it's a heavy Cruiser profile, hull spectrograph is inconclusive and power readingsâ€| they're through the roof! Its producing more power a second than every ship in the fleet," the same Lieutenant reported, "I can't get anything conclusive on its weapon systems, but I'm not picking up any amounts of Eezo from it at all, there are no mass effect fields or anything,"

"Hmmâ€| interesting, that would explain the high power output Lieutenant; they don't have mass effect cores so they had to invent their own form of FTL, one that requires a lot of power. It can't be Batarian, look at the ship design, they prefer thin and tall ships not large bulky and heavily armed and armoured ships. Do you know what that means Lieutenant?" Septimus asked, the Lieutenant shook his head,

"Contact that ship, I want to try and let them know were on the same side here," Septimus ordered, nearly every crewman in the CIC had stopped working to see what was going to happen, they were tense and Septimus was shaking slightly, if he mucked up than it would all go downhill from there.

Soon enough though the Comm screen came to life and the image of the ship's Captain came on screen, it was similar enough to an Asari, it was dressed in some sort of grey garb that had decorated shoulders and two badges of some sort on its chest, one was of a planet with some sort of plant underneath it and going up and around but ending before it formed a full circle it had three little stars underneath it all. The other badge was of a large bird of prey with its wing spread out fully above its head, a shield was over its bottom half with four letters of the unknown alien language, it too was above a planet with writing replacing the plant and with four stars, two one each side of the planet. The alien itself was pale with short brown fur atop its head although it looked partially black, it had a scar running down the side of its face from its fur line to just by its nose, it was a veteran that much was for sure, the being raised an eyebrow at him as if it was expecting him to say something, so he did.

"I am General Septimus Oraka of the Turian Hierarchy, this fleet is here toâ€|" he stopped when the alien raised its hand and looked off screen and said something he couldn't understand, a look of anger passed briefly across its face before it simply smacked its palm into its face, it shouted a single word before looking back at him in an apologetic way, it shrugged its shoulders when a Lieutenant on the Coms said,

"Sir, it seems to be sending a language package, but it's going to take some time to sort through it all and tie it into the translation systems," Septimus nodded,

"Get to it than, the sooner the better,"

Oraka looked back at the alien who was waiting patiently and uploaded a small video file showing the alien where to dock with his ship, it seemed to look a bit indecisive at first it pointed to itself and then pointed to Septimus as if asking 'you want me to come to you?' Septimus nodded and suddenly hoped that a nod meant yes to these aliens and not something offensive,

The alien nodded back but sent its own file to the Indomitable, it showed more ships coming in around the alien vessel and a small count down appeared, he might not have known what symbol represented which number but it was going down quickly, it would be done in roughly an hour if he were to guess. He understood that the alien was letting him know more of his people would be arriving when the timer ran out; it was a gesture that could have been taken the wrong way by a hotter headed commander.

* * *

><p>UNSC _**Sevenfold**_**, Main Armoury, August 20****th**** 2587**

"Hey, how come we got a newbie on our team, huh? I mean we worked fine before but lady green over there is just going to cramp our style I meanâ€|" Sargent Becky Coulson started moaning again before being interrupted by David, she was leaning back against a locker with one of her feet on the bench runnig through the middle of the room, fastining te boot tight,

"Stow it Beck, 'Lady Green' over there has more combat experience than the rest of us, for cryin' out loud she's a freaking Forerunner so she fought the flood, that's more than you've had to deal with Beck," David scolded the Sargent, she may have been good at her job but she was an ODST and thought that she was better than everyone else, David was busy fastening his chest plate to his chest,

"Oh come on Becks, you just jealous that you aint the only girl on the team now, admit it," said Eugene Heckle, a large black man that looked more like he should be playing Grav Ball rather than fighting Insurrectionists and now aliens, when Eugene had first joined the team David had taken one look at him and called him 'Train', everyone was confused by the name but it stuck,

"Train, be nice, Becks is on her time of the month so you might wanna be careful otherwise she'll add your balls to her collection," joked Marcus 'Felix' Knight, a tanned man with a black goatee and a flop of black hair, like Eugene David had given him the nickname the second Marcus joined the team,

"Oh up yours Felix," Becky retorted weakly, these people made up Echo team,

The team was putting on their armour ready for their upcoming mission, one they had not expected, they were to act as Commander Walters guard detail as they went to the alien ship, the Commander had already gotten ready, and was waiting for them in the corner with the latest addition to their team, the Forerunner Warrior-Servant known as Glory, she didn't bother to tell them the rest of her

name.

David was the first one ready out of the team and headed over to join the Commander and Glory, he had an MA5K strapped to him with a M6H in his holster, the Commander also kept an M6H with him while Glory had some wicked looking Forerunner gun that was designed to fight wars against other beings rather than the flood.

"Do you meatheads all ways take this long to get ready or just when you have a date?" the Commander joked, David laughed at the jibe and shook his head,

"Ah, just wanna keep our dates waiting, plus we gotta make ourselves look pretty, I mean we've got to make up for your lack of looks sir," David replied, Walters raised an eyebrow,

"So sir, Lorelie tells me that you face-palmed while talking to the alien leader, what was that about?" David inquired, it had been funny when they had heard about it but he wanted to know why, Philip's expression changed, he looked pissed off more than anything now,

"My XO is useless, when Lorelie came back online I had asked her to send them the language packet but she was still sorting herself out, I told Lieutenant Commander Skye to send it to them but he was rather adamant about having Lieutenant Vickers do it, his argument was 'I never worked the Comm station before, I don't know how,' as soon as we link up with the rest of the fleet I am having him transferred, he is nothing but trouble," Walters told him, "I face palmed cause that was the most pathetic excuse I have ever heard, ever."

David nodded in understanding, if his 2IC started doing that in a potentially hostile environment he would have shot him, pure and simple. Glory seemed to understand as she stood there, to David Forerunners were odd creatures, the males tended to be rather ugly in his opinion, they were tough as fuck to try and kill but they were ugly, the females, of any caste, seemed to be highly attractive, Glory was no exception, even if she didn't have the same facial features as his own race, like the nose. Her dark red hair was short and tied back, away from her face; emerald eyes watched his every movement,

"So Glory, looking forward to seeing a new race?" David asked as casually as possible, she didn't even hesitate before replying,

"No, they're Turians, from what I remember they were a highly militaristic race that will probably try and convince you that they are more superior than your race," her voice was rugged and harsh with a slight feminine smoothness to it,

"Okayâ€| this'll be funâ€|not," David replied, Walters looked around awkwardly; after all it was his idea to make contact with them,

"There is nothing to be ashamed of Commander; you are fulfilling your role as the caretakers of the galaxy by making contact with them, if something goes wrong than we will simply show them that we are superior, not them." Glory reassured the Commander,

"Wait, how come you know who they are? You haven't even seen them yet," David asked,

"The Commander showed me what they looked like, the Turians were trouble makers' back when Forerunners ruled the galaxy, they might not have had the ability to travel through the stars but when life workers tried to index them before the firing of the Halo array they fought against us every step, we had to forcibly index them, their ancestors believed that we were 'evil spirits' to be conquered, it was pathetic really, swords and arrows versus hardlight weapons and energy shielding, you can guess the outcome of the fights we had," Glory replied, it set David's nerves on edge, would having her tag along cause a fight? He doubted it as it had been a hundred thousand years since then.

It wasn't too much longer before the rest of the team was ready and joined the Commander, David and Glory; they made their way towards the lone Pelican bay where one of the seven Pelicans that the Sevenfold carried was ready and waiting, the blue engines shimmered and the armour plating glistened, they got into the back of the Pelican and strapped themselves down,

"Yo Commander, how come we aint waiting for the Daedalus to arrive before going to see these aliens, I mean it's not like we can talk to them or anything," Train asked, Philip simply smiled,

"I had Lorelie work out a basic text translation system," he pulled out a data pad from his pocket, "I type what I want to say into this and hand it over, he, or she, reads it and writes a reply, it simple enough, although the only problem was trying to organise their alphabet into the pad," the Commander replied, "Plus the Daedalus will arrive in half an hour, I want to at least make sure their fleet Commander knows so he doesn't start shooting when our reinforcements arrive."

The team seemed to agree with him as no one said a word as the Pelican lifted off and into space, it flew with the speed and agility that Turians could only ever dream of, the trip from the Sevenfold to the alien flag ship would be around ten minutes, as they approached the alien fleet two Turian fighters took up an escorting position next to the Pelican, guiding them to the large flagship, Philip had to admit it was an impressive sight, it was as large as a Marathon MK-II Cruiser, the sweeping wings made the entire vessel look like a bird of prey to him.

Inside the hanger of the flagship was relatively cramped, it wasn't designed for a large amount of fighters or drop ships, the Pelican turned around presenting the troop bay to the aliens, when the ramp lowered Philip was surprised to see an honour guard was waiting for him and Echo, he swallowed once before stepping out of the Pelican and instantly the honour guard snapped to attention, a sign of a well-trained and organised military, maybe Glory was right and this was not a good idea.

"I'll go first, Echo follow up, Glory cover our rear," Philip ordered, the members of Echo nodded and Philip slowly walked down the ramp and into the alien hanger, the guards stood even straighter, as Philip moved forward with Echo in tow he noticed that there were more than one alien species, one was a tall, thin amphibious race with large black eyes and two horn like protrusions sticking out from the top of its head, the other was a race of blue skinned aliens, crests topped their heads above remarkably familiar facial features. Philip

slowed slightly as he realised this, Echo also slowed down as they too realised that there was more than one race.

"Gloryâ€| "Philip whispered, she moved up to stand next to him she took in a quick look at the aliens, he figured that she was contacting what was left of the Domain, finding out what the Forerunners knew about the races,

"The blue ones are called Asari, they're mono-gendered, they reproduce through connecting their nervous systems with another being and this allows them to use its genetic information to manipulate the DNA in its offspring. The tall amphibious race is calledâ€| Salarians, they were never expected to evolve into a sentient life form, they were nothing more than fancy lizards." Glory told him, this would certainly be interesting.

Philip started walking towards the three aliens at the end of the group; the 'Asari' member looked slightly concerned, he couldn't read the expressions on the 'Turian' or 'Salarian' members of the delegation, if it could be called that. When he reached them Philip was nervous, in fact he was starting to sweat, Glory stood next to him with Echo stood behind him, they were on guard but kept their weapons stowed. Philip pulled out his data pad and typed in his name, rank and service number and then handed it over to the Turian.

* * *

><p>Hanger Bay 2, Flagship _*_**Indomitable**_*_**,
Connecting Relay to 314, 2154 Citadel Standard**

Septimus Oraka looked at the alien delegate, the leader was the same one from the view screen in the CIC, the other that went from standing behind the escorts to standing next to the leader was slightly taller and had a more feminine shape covered in advanced armour, he couldn't see her face but guessed it was similar to the leaders face. The other figures were dressed in a dark charcoal black armour with blue visors, they all had different, various attachments to their armour.

The leader of the group took out a data pad of some sort and typed into it and handed it over to Oraka, Septimus was surprised by what he saw, in perfect Turian was;

_COMMANDER PHILIP MICHAEL WALTERS UNSC service
number-00932-2093-PW_

Septimus was only surprised for a second but then he figured that this was the result of the language packet he sent back to the Commanders ship merely as a courtesy, the sooner they could talk the better, his fleet had a mission to do and while this was a very important and delicate procedure he needed it to hurry along. This was why he had the Asari Captain Afera Kelia with him, he would have her meld with the Commander and use her to communicate, it was crude but effective, he realised that in the pad a keyboard of sorts had popped up, it was using Turian letters but it wasn't quite right but he still figured out how to type the reply;

_I AM GENERAL SEPTIMUS ORAKA OF THE TURIAN HEIRARCHY, TO MAKE
COMMUNICATIONS EASIER I HAVE ASKED CAPTAIN AFERA KELIA OF THE ASARI
REPUBLICS TO INNITATE A MIND MEL WITH YOU, THIS WILL ALLOW HER TO

SPEAK YOUR LANGUAGE AND TRANSLATE IT FOR US WHILE WE WORK ON
UPDATEING OUR TRANSLATORS WITH YOUR LANGUAGE._

Septimus handed the pad back to the Commander, who read it and seemed a bit indecisive, when the person next to him said something before he replied with only three different words, one word was repeated or at least it sounded like it was repeated, he really regretted not learning how to communicate with aliens, he should have taken the course when it was offered.

The Commander handed the pad back for the General to read, it simply said;

OKAY THEN

Septimus motioned for Afera to move forward and initiate the meld, she offered a small bow to the alien Commander which he returned, she then stood forward, put her hand on his temple and started the meld.

* * *

><p>Philip could feel the 'Asari' shift through his mind, going through all the memories associated with English and the meaning behind each word, it was like relearning everything in one sudden push of information. When she finally receded from his mind he let out a small gasp,</p>

"I had told you it would hurt," Glory said from his side as she held him up, his knees refused to fully support his weight at that moment,

"Yeah well it was that or communicate by writing everything down; it was easier this way,"

"The melding is usually very tiring, it takes many years of practise to master and I am no master," came a new voice, it was unsure and uneven, like a child still learning to speak even though they knew what they were saying, Philip figured that it was the Asari and as he looked up at the voice sure enough there was the blue skinned alien, stood in front of him, she too looked rather tiered from the joining,

"Your language is interesting, all the different words and meanings, some of which we have never heard of," Afera stated, Philip laughed weakly,

"Yeah, English is a particularly odd language, take the word supercalifragilisticexpialidocious for example, it's an abomination of a word but was used in a song, a very funny song might I add, so is hippopotomonstrosesquipedaliophobia, that word means a fear of long words, ironic isn't it?" Philip semi-joked, Afera looked slightly mortified at the long words, Philip let out a small laugh,

"Don't worry, most people simply use the term 'scared of long words'," he reassured her, she looked slightly less stressed after that, Philip then once again stood at his full height, an impressive six foot and three inches and offered his hand to the Asari,

"Commander Philip Walters of the UNSC S_evenfold_, a pleasure to make your acquaintance Captain," he said to Afera who looked mildly shocked at the manners of the alien Commander,

"It is indeed a pleasure to make your acquaintance Commander; it is not every day that a new race is discovered," Afera replied, the Commanders body guards seemed to share a look with one another as did the Commander and the person by his side,

"Don't even say it Glory," Philip said before Glory could even utter a word, "What do you mean by a 'new race'? Is it like a race you haven't encountered before or a race that is new to the whole idea of space travel because we are certainly not the latter," Philip continued,

"A little bit of both perhaps, but if you don't mind my asking, how long has your race been traveling the stars? We now it is for a little under a century at the least butâ€|" Afera trailed off, Philip and the members of Echo frowned,

"How do you know that?" Philip asked slowly, full of suspicion, the Asari looked back at Septimus and spoke in her natural tongue which was obviously understood by the 'Salarian' and Turian, they both nodded before Afera turned back to face Walters and Glory,

"Perhaps we should take this conversation elsewhere," Afera offered, Walters was a bit reluctant to let it go but agreed. They were soon escorted to a room deep within the bowels of the Dreadnought; inside the room was a single table with several chairs next to it along with what appeared to be holo-projectors, it was a simple meeting room. Echo team stood against one of the walls behind the seat offered to Philip and to his surprise, Glory, she was technically part of Echo and was about to join them when he told her to sit, she was the Forerunner member of the delegation whether or not she liked it, she passed her weapon off to David before sitting down.

"So, how do you know about us?" Philip asked the second everyone had settled in,

"An Asari deep space expedition came across a wreck in space, a boarding party was sent aboard and after some time they found several bodies and some computer files we are still trying our best to translate what we found but it is all very complicatedâ€|" Afera said, she looked slightly ashamed especially when confronted with four silver/blue visors that just screamed death at her and the look from the Walters,

"Do you have the information? The data your team gathered?" Philip asked, Afera nodded in confirmation, "Show me," Philip didn't so much as ask as he did demand, Afera spoke quietly with the other members of the alien delegation before handing over a small orange screened data pad, on it were several pictures of the wreck along with the data file collected, looking through them he quickly named off what they were;

"A partially completed Shaw multi-variant calculus slip-space navigational input parameter, a letter and a book; Lord of the flies actually, a good book," he then studied the stills of the wreck itself, in one of the stills in big bulky chalk white letters

was; UNSC Lowrentz, he tried to remember back through all of the ship names he knew but came to no obvious answer, he contacted Lorelie back aboard the Sevenfold to run the name through the UNSC database, the answer was quick enough,

"The UNSC Lowrentz was a Destroyer during the second battle of Harvest; she was lost with all hands just before Cole managed to pull the victory out of the hat,"

"Thanks Lorelie," Philip replied, he explained about the Lowrentz and the battle of Harvest which in turn led to the Human-Covenant war, he was vague and brushed aside questions, the talk of the war reminded him to one of the reasons he was actually here,

"So, why exactly is a fleet of two hundred warships entering our space exactly?" he asked, Afera answered by explaining about the 'Skylillian Purge' after Edan Had'dah had started his quest to put Barians at the forefront of galactic politics, making them the most powerful species in the known galaxy, however when Edan's 'crusaders' started bombing planets from orbit with Dreadnought class weapons and had started dropping asteroids on others, and on the worlds his forces did invade conventionally the atrocities committed were^{un}indescribable, the Turians replied to this with the full might of their war machine which resulted in most Barians either; dying, escaping to the Terminus systems or escaping with Edan into the unknown. This was the reason for the Council fleet, to make sure he never committed such atrocities again, she decided to leave out the slaves that had been found along with weapons, if the Commanders race ever had the chance to strike back they would have done by now, but he did mention that they were in a war of their own around the same time and thought that many of their colonies had been lost to this 'Covenant'.

"Perhaps you could tell us as to why you are here at this time Commander," Afera probed slightly for information,

"Okay but first I want to see a ship profile of these Barians," Philip requested, Afera nodded and showed him, his look darkened at the memories it brought up, the blood red emergency light of the bridge, the bodies of the crew floating in the lack of gravity along with broken bits of the plastic display screens that had been smashed, hammering down on the MAC fire control and then the Archer missile stunt^{un}!

"Are you okay Commander?" Afera asked, bringing him back out of the memories, he looked up to see everyone looking at him with some concern on their alien faces, even Glory was looking at him through the golden visor of her helmet, he realised that his left hand had started to trace the scar on his face, he quickly regained his composure and put on a blank face,

"Yes, I'm fine," he replied quickly, too quickly, Afera had started to say something but Philip raised a hand, "I'm afraid we're going to have to cut the meeting short, I have to contact my superior officer and let him know of this recent^{un} development, I beg of you not to leave this area of space for the time being, things will be getting interesting soon, plus I'll have to be back for when the Daedalus arrives," Philip told them as he stood up, Echo snapped to attention as he did so and Glory too stood up, he may have lied about needing to back before the Daedalus arrives but they didn't need to know.

They didn't need to know a lot of things and he was going to have to speak to Admiral Lasky before he did anything else, especially with the most recent discovery.

He quickly made his way to the hanger bay were the Pelican was still waiting, Echo and Glory followed closely behind, as soon as the last member of Echo had stepped on the ramp in fact he had ordered them to take off and head back to the Sevenfold, General Oraka, Captain Kelia and Captain Schells entered the hanger just as the Pelican lifted off, Septimus turned to Afera,

"What was that all about?" he asked with a slight growl in his voice, if Afera had somehow managed to piss off this race she would be the first Asari to fail at first contact,

"I-I don't know exactly, but he said he needed to contact his superior officer to find out what he should do next, he seemed rather distraught at the sight of a Batarian vessel,"

"Yes I figured that out, the question is why he was so distraught?" Septimus growled out,

"Once again I don't know, but he did request that we do not leave this area of space for the time being," Afera replied,

"Fine, report back to your ships and tell the vessels under your command not to leave formation until further notice, I don't know how long it'llâ€!" he was cut off by a loud alarm ringing throughout the ship, he quickly called up to the CIC via his Omni-tool,

"What's going on?" General Desolas answered him from the other side,

"Multiple Spacial ruptures near the alien ship, there's at least a hundred of them, they appeared just as the countdown on that package the alien Commander sent to you ran out, it might be their reinforcements," Desolas told him,

"Understood, if it is them do not, I repeat DO NOT fire at them, I'm on my way up now." Septimus replied as he started on his way back to the CIC of the Indomitable.

Afera was about to call for a shuttle to pick her up ASAP when Schells nudged her side, she looked at him to see he was looking at his Omni-tool, it was from one of the camera's on one of the ships, probably a Salarian ship, on the screen it showed the space around the Sevenfold where a hundred spirals of green/blue light just appeared before spitting out a ship each, the last and biggest rupture let out a massive vessel that was huge when compared to the Sevenfold, in fact she guessed it was around Four kilometres long, nearly three times the size of the Destiny Ascension, on its side in large white letters in a language only she could read at the time was one word; Daedalus.

She was begging to think that this race had been in space a lot longer and was a lot more advanced than she had originally given them credit for.

* * *

><p>The Pelican was heading towards the hanger bay at full speed as the Daedalus was due to arrive at any moment, Philip tried to contact Lorelie but was never answered, he even tried to contact the bridge but was once again met with no answer,

"Pilot, you sure the Com is working?" Philip asked, the pilot didn't even bother to look at him as she answered,

"The Comm is green, whatvers wrong must be on their end, at least we caught it before the mission huh Commander?" Philip was inclined to agree but his nerves were on edge, in fact he had the same feeling now as he did just before the _Gorgon _incident, it wasn't a good feeling,

Just as the Pelican was coming into the hanger one of the AAA Helix guns near the enterance spun up and fired a burst straight at the Pelican, the rounds missed but exploded nearby, the point of triple A was to either hit the target or the shrapnel from the flack rounds would take it out and thats what happened this particular time, fortinutly for the people inside the Pelican, the flack knocked out the rear engines causing lurch forward, knocking Philip who hadn't been strapped down, on to the floor. The Pilot managed to get the crippled bird into the hanger and not into the armor, that would have ended less than desirably.

Echo team was knocked out by the impact along with the Commander, the pilot was still concious, if barely, she watched as the enterance to the hanger opened to reveal three figures in basic combat fatigues, they definatly weren't UNSC standard.

* * *

><p>AN: Soooo... the ending huh? i didn't really think it would develop that way but... here we go, now before you ask questions... think, and i mean really think. the answers are there mostly so you just have to think.**

Now i am a little bit unsure on this chapter especially the 'meeting' part of it so let me know what you think. also my laptop is acting up at the moment so updates will be... awkward, i'll try and do them as quick as possible but i cant if my laptop decides its not going to charge sooo yeah.

REVIEW! :)

7. Chapter 7

**Het, chapter 7 is here, i would recommend rereading chapter 6 first, i have worked on it to flow better as its own chapter and into this chapter.

>

Enjoy :)- i own nothing.

* * *

><p>UNSC _**Sevenfold**_**, Interstellar space, August 20****th**** 2587**

Lieutenant Commander Skye walked through the hallway towards the A.I core near the rear of the ship, if his plan was to succeed he would need Lorelie out of the way, he could have done it from the bridge but the Lieutenants were damn observant and would have noticed and they would have tried to stop him. No what he planned was a much safer and much simpler option, the few loyal soldiers that followed him would storm the bridge as soon as the A.I was down, they had orders to take the crew alive where possible, mainly so they could be used as examples later on after he got the ship to a free system, away from the tyranny of Earth.

But of course all that meant taking the ship and holding it until the Slip-Space drive was operational again, which wouldn't be too long now. As he approached the A.I core two guards stood to attention, they were unflinchingly loyal to the UNSC and they would be taken care of, he couldn't risk a couple of soldiers ruining his plans, but he would deal with them after he had dealt with Lorelie.

The A.I core was a fairly large if empty room, the data matrixes were in massive processors within the walls and underneath the floor, there was however a terminal along with a holographic plinth where Lorelie could show herself if need be.

"What are you doing Lieutenant Commander?" Lorelie asked as the door shut behind him, he didn't answer straight away and walked over to the terminal where he could shut her down,

"Lieutenant Commander you are not meant to be in here," Lorelie said, her holographic form appeared on the plinth, she was wearing a pure white toga with a golden trim, her blond hair was tied up in a series of plats and her feet were in a simple pair of reed sandals, she looked cross and he could tell she was as the Core warmed up, a physical reaction to her simulated emotions.

"I am simply making sure that the data core wasn't damaged and that you were at full capacity; we wouldn't want to go into the first full naval engagement since the end of the war with a faulty A.I now would we?" He asked with an almost sadistic smile on his face, it was a small but tell-tale sign of a horrible plot in his mind.

"Commander it is against protocol for you to be in here, I will report you to Commander Walters and Admiral Lasky if you do notâ€¦ what are you doing?" she stopped her threat midway as he started the A.I shutdown process, "Lieutenant Commander Skye! It is punishable by death to disable a ship board A.I without aâ€¦" she never finished, her avatar froze before flickering off, and now she was dealt with he had to deal with the UNSC marines.

Thankfully two soldiers loyal to him would be dealing with that anyâ€¦ the sound of gunfire finished the thought; he walked out of the core to see the two marines on the floor with gaping holes in their chests, their armour did little to protect them from the 30. Calibre bullets that had peppered their bodies before they could even react, not the way a marine would like to go, they prefer to die gloriously in combat against anything that threatens Earth, not that there had been a lot of that since the end of the Covenant war, sure there were small skirmishes with pirate forces along with Covenant loyalists as well as the New Phoenix incident.

One of his men aimed at him as he walked out but quickly holstered

his weapon as he saw who it was; they were dressed in simple camouflage with ballistic vests.

"Has the team taken the bridge now?" Skye asked the two men, one of them nodded as he answered,

"Yes sir, most of crew tried to resist but they were subdued, we caught them off guard so most of them were unprepared, all the survivors are being rounded up in the mess hall, we've got our engineers working on the Translight drive, it should be ready in a few minutes." The man replied,

"Good," Skye walked past the two men and towards the bridge, soon he would take control of the Sevenfold and take it to the free systems where it could be studied and then copied.

He entered the bridge, it was obvious that at least one officer had been shot but there wasn't enough blood for him to think the officer in question was dead, he was quite proud that the bridge was secured so quickly, it showed that the men were good at what they trained for.

He sat in the command chair and looked at the men he had replace the actual bridge crew, they were loyal to the cause, there weren't all that many people to man the ship now, it was meant to be operated by a crew of hundreds not a measly twenty six people that had little training to operate a modern UNSC Destroyer.

"Sir, the Commander's Pelican has left the alien command ship, orders?" the man asked, Skye frowned, he had expected the Commander to be gone long enough for him to take the ship out of the empty space between systems.

Skye also knew it wouldn't be long before the Daedalus Carrier group arrived, he would be cutting it closeâ€¦ very close.

"Tell the men in Engineering to get the Drive online now," he ordered, "If the Pelican gets too close to landing before we jump into Slip-space blow it up, make sure they don't land," he added, there was no point taking any chances, he could see the Pelican getting closer and closer, the alien fleet was directly in front of the Sevenfold, they were nothing but small twinkling lights against the dark void.

He felt the hull rumble ever so slightly for a second before it stopped, one of his men reported that the Pelican was down but had landed inside the hanger and that was not good, if even one of them survived they would cause trouble for his small crew, especially that damn Forerunner.

"Have a team go make sure there are no survivors," he ordered, soon enough a team was moving into the hanger, he turned his attention from the view screen to check on the status of the Slip-space drive.

UNSC **Sevenfold_** , main hanger, August 20****th****
2587**

Philip jolted back into conciseness minutes after the crash, he was still in the pilot cabin of the Pelican but the bulkhead into the

troop bay had shut itself just the crash and he was on the small bit of floor available in the cramped cabin with his back to resting on the door, he heard someone talking, their voices weren't muffled by a helmet leaving him to believe that whoever had taken control of his ship was coming to make sure he and the rest of the team were dead.

"Raul, go make sure the pilots dead, we'll check the troop bay," a voice ordered, Philip reached for his service pistol attached to his thigh, his entire body ached from the crash and if he were a smarter man he would know that his wrist was in no condition to fire the powerful handgun as he had fractured it in the crash, thankfully that was his worst injury.

The pilot was limp in her seat, he could see that she was still breathing but she was out cold leaving Philip to deal with the 'Raul' by himself, he saw the silhouette of 'Raul' against the bright lights on the hanger ceiling, he had a M45D Tactical Shotgun pointing into the cabin, Philip aimed the M6H sidearm at the traitor and fired, the recoil of his sidearm caused his fractured wrist to crack and break, his shot hit Raul in the shoulder causing him to drop the shotgun.

Philip was in agony, he cradled his shattered wrist in his good hand, he vaguely heard the other two people shouting along with Raul's cries for help, he heard the high pitched sound of an energy weapon discharge once than twice as the two other voices were abruptly silenced,

"Train, Felix, secure the door; make sure we don't have any unwanted visitors," the Lieutenants voices rang out, "Glory, check the pilot cabin, and check on the Commanders okay," the sound of Glory's energy weapon discharging again silenced the injured shotgun wielding man, Glory stood where the Insurrectionist stood just moments ago, her armour could tell that the Commander was indeed alive and had in fact been the one to fire the shot and not the Pilot. She used a constraint field to move Philip out of the Pelicans Cockpit and lowered him to the floor gently before releasing the pilot from her constraints and using her large six fingered hands hefted the unconscious pilot out as well.

David saw the Commander and rushed over, noting that his wrist was injured along with several fingers David motioned for Becky to come over,

"Becks see what you can do for the Commander, he'll live but we need him in fighting shape, ASAP," David instructed, as Becky worked on the Commander David took a look at the pilot, she was banged up pretty bad from the crash and would be lucky to survive until she received proper medical care,

"Well, that was fun," the Commander said through gritted teeth, "Lieutenant, we have to head to the A.I core to get Lorelie back online, without her we're done for, but we need to be quick, can't risk the bastards knowing we're alive or our destination at the A.I core," Philip stated, David seemed to agree with this statement,

"The only problem is we don't know how many people they have on board or if there are hostages and if there are we don't know where they

are or how many there are," David stated, Philip shook his head,

"Doesn't matter, without Lorelie we don't stand a chance, plus she can get the information required in a fraction of a second, hell she'll be able to kill some of the fuckers before they can do anything," Philip replied, Becky shoved a makeshift caste onto the Commanders wrist before they set off on retaking the Sevenfold.—

Office of Naval Intelligence outpost Trevelyan-Forerunner city-August 20**th**** 2587**

The Librarian walked down the bustling hallway towards her private chambers, she was disturbed by some recent news she had heard; someone had taken a Human colony as slaves, of course the high ranking Admirals of the UNSC voted to retake the colony, this didn't disturb her, in fact she expected such a reaction but what had disturbed her but it was who had done it, the rumours she had heard said that the race was bipedal and had four eyes, other than that information on them was sorely lacking, she still knew who it was; Batarians, it had to have been, no other race she knew of matched the description.

As she entered her chamber her mind wondered over the memories of her long life, from her first experiments as a first form Lifeworker to meeting the Warrior-Servant that she would eventually marry, she thought about her children before their first mutations into Warrior-Servants like their father, oh how she missed her children, their brilliant grey-blue eyes, their laughs of excitement; it had been over a hundred and ten thousand years since they perished at the hands of the Forerunners greatest enemy and now their only ally. She would give nearly anything for them back but they were gone now, along with nearly the entire Forerunner race.

She thought back to when she had the UNSC Spartans come rushing into the Sangheili base, just four soldiers with fearsome armour, the way the little Unggoy ran away screaming in terror from them, claiming them to be demons, the Sangheili made a valiant attempt at defending against the four Human soldiers, but they all fell by the hands of mighty warriors, they had come to the rescue of a Human scientist and kill Jul 'Mdama but when they saw her they changed their plans, she became their top priority, they still completed their mission with a surprising amount of lethality and brutal skill she had seen only from the Didact's Prometheans.

Of course when she was taken aboard the Infinity she was initially a prisoner, it appeared that Humans still didn't trust her kind, she doubted they ever would. The ships Ancilla, Roland, was a rather interesting character, he said his avatar was that of a World War II Royal Air Force pilot, the Librarian was shocked to hear such words and yet a 'world war' was not all that unbelievable for Humans, but two? That had shocked her, when the Captain of the vessel, Captain Thomas Lasky realised she wasn't going to try and kill every Human in existence and when he learnt her name he had her moved so fast it had confused her slightly as to what was happening.

Lasky then took the time to talk to her, and share with her some of Humanities history, or their recorded history, how they went from a war that had literally threatened to tear the world apart to

launching manned missions to Luna, Then as they realised they expanded throughout the Sol System, and from there how they fought amongst themselves and found unity under a single banner, then the invention of the Slip-space drive by two humans, Tobias Shaw and Wallace Fujikawa, led a science team and created the first prototype of the Slip-space drive, Humanity then expanded in a glorious age of prosperity and colonisation, only for Civil war and terrorist actions to threaten everything they had worked to achieve.

But as Lasky said at the time it was the most fortunate piece of blind luck Humanity had ever stumbled upon, when she asked what he meant, it struck a sour note within him, indeed the atmosphere in the room changed so dramatically.

UNSC Infinity, Captains Quarters, Orbit over Requiem, March 7
th 2558**

_She sat in the human built chair; it felt odd to sit on something solid rather than a Hard-light seat, the Captain of the vessel she was aboard had just finished explaining about the 'Insurrectionist' movement of the 25_th_ and early 26_th_ century's, he had mentioned it was a fortunate piece of blind luck,_

"_How can a civil war of such magnitude, be considered lucky?" she asked, surely he was joking, she had never understood Human humour, the Captains face darkened and he visibly stiffened, his eyes suddenly clouded with old memories, none of them looked good from where she was sat,_

"_In 2525 at the height of the Insurrection we made first contact, it wasn't the peaceful kind either, they called themselves the Covenant and that we were to be exterminated in the name of their gods, in _YOUR_ name," He spat out the last part, those words had literally taken her back, the shock must have been evident on her face as he soon commented,_

"_Are you really surprised? Your kind left all your toys out for the Covenant to play with, hell you even left a _ship_ on the Prophets home world, of course they worshiped your kind as gods, they then started to conquer every species they came across and forced them to join and to worship your kind, so when they met us and found we were your inheritors and not 'them' they decided to wipe us out, they used technology they took from _Forerunner_ installations for their weapons, they were hundreds of years ahead of us technologically, we never stood a chance against them." He hissed at her, he blamed her kind for the war and she couldn't blame him,_

"_Hell we never knew you existed until the end of the war, after _tens of billions_ were dead and _hundreds_ of worlds were burnt and turned into glass, after our Fortress world, Reach, fell one of the ships that did escape ended up right next to one of the Halo's, the official details are classified, even to me but I know a Spartan was forced to destroy it, to stop the Flood from escaping. Thanâ€| than they found Earth, _Billions _of civilians died in the first few days, we were so, so close to losing, hell if the Sangheili hadn't split after their leadership was wiped out we would have died out then and there." Lasky shook his head as he finished._

The Librarian cleared her head of such thoughts and memories; they would serve her no purpose and she had much more important things to

do than to, she might even try to find out what happened to the Merse.

Flagship Indomitable, CIC, Other side of Relay 314, 2154 Citadel Standard

Septimus arrived at the CIC just in time to see the large Human warship appear next to the much smaller ship that Commander Walters was in charge of, Desolas was at a nearby station watching the fleet arrive with both caution and curiosity,

"I did say that they must have their own form of FTL, granted I was making an assumption but I was right, they did create a viable non Mass Effect based FTL drive," Septimus said as he stood next to his fellow General,

"Yes, what concerned me however was this," Desolas started by changing the screen from the Human fleet to still of the impromptu delegation, more specifically the one that stood by the Commanders side, the figure was wearing a very different armour set to the rest of the Humans along with a golden visor,

"I don't see the problem Desolas," Septimus said with a slight frown, Desolas sighed at the response,

"Look at it Septimus, look at the armour, some of it is floating, _floating,_ he emphasised, "that and how many fingers does the person have?" Septimus frowned then leaned closer, sure enough the person had six fingers and not five like the rest had,

"Indeed that is troubling, how did I miss that?" He asked himself,

"You were busy dealing with first contact, you wouldn't have been looking to count how many fingers one of them had," Desolas replied, "How much do you know about ancient Turian beliefs Septimus?" he asked, it was a sudden change in topic that caused Septimus to look at the other General with surprise,

"By the look on your face I'm going to hazard a guess that you don't know where I'm going with this, so I'll get on with it," Desolas typed in a few commands and changed the screen again, this time it showed a cave painting drawn by ancient Turians, it depicted a group of beings taking their ancestors and storing them in the stars, another drawing next to it showed their ancestors attacking the figures and a last one showed two figures, both were definitely not Turians, one showed a female figure with simple yet elegant features, the other wore some sort of armour and had six fingers, almost exactly like the one on the delegation member,

"Impossible, _that_ must be impossible," Septimus denied the evidence in front of him, "There is no way that could be true, what you're saying is that these people took our _ancestors_, no evidence has turned up of any race preceding the Prothean's, and unless those are Prothean, it's impossible," Septimus hissed, the idea that he had just had a member of a race that was going through the galaxy before ancient Turians had mastered even the simplest of tools on his shipâ€ he was flabbergasted, he let out a small growl as he moved towards the comm station,

"I need to speak to the alien Commander, NOW!" He roared at the young officer, he was acting probably a little too harshly but he was very concerned about what he had just seen,

"I should probably mention also that our oh so wise ancestors thought that they were evil spirits that would take our children and hide them amongst the stars, of course our knowledge of such a time is severely limited, this was the last cave drawing for a period of around three thousand years, and it is around one hundred thousand years old, older than the Protheans," Desolas added, it only seemed to make Septimus even more desperate to contact the Commander to find out what in the name of the Spirits of Palaven was going on, when the view screen finally flashed into existence he was greeted with a sight he had not been expecting.

UNSC **_Sevenfold-**_** Hallway A2, August 20****th****
2587**

David moved forward slowly with his weapon drawn, they had gotten Lorelie online again but they hadn't run into any form of trouble, the ship was eerily quiet, the only sound was the low hum of the engine, they hadn't encountered any of the Insurrectionist's on the way to the A.I core, they didn't find out why until after Lorelie came back online,

"What do mean he has hostages in the Bridge?" David hissed at the A.I sharply, her avatar was on one of the many plinths lining the hallway; she looked at the Marine Lieutenant incredulity,

"I mean that he must have predicted your plan, he can't take the ship into FTL now, not with me back online or with the Daedalus right behind us, he had most of his forces move to the bridge with some hostages, mostly the Bridge crew, the restâ€¦ the rest he had either executed or placed within the brig, their bodies are still in the mess hallâ€¦" Lorelie trailed off slightly, David took the time to ask her the location of the rest of the soldiers under Skye's command,

"Round the corner, eleven contacts!" Lorelie warned them, they were severely limited in options for cover in the empty hallway, David grabbed the Commander and shoved him into a door frame as cover, then both he and Train used the same door frame as cover while Becky, Felix and Glory used another door frame slightly further up the hall as cover,

"How did I not see that?" Lorelie questioned out loud, Walters grumbled slightly and told her,

"Doesn't matter, contact the Daedalus, let the Admiral Morrison know what's going on and to tell Admiral Lasky, relay all information from the meeting to the Admirals, make sure they know," Philip told her, he was panting heavily, his ribs were becoming more and more painful by the minuet, his wrist was throbbing and his body felt like it was on fire,

Just than the Insurrectionist team of eleven men and women came round the corner, most were armed with the 30. Calibre gun favoured by Innies forces, it was terribly inaccurate but it wouldn't matter in such a confined space, a few of them were armed with MA3 assault rifles, one of which seemed to have an attachment to the

barrel,

"Contact!" Becky yelled as she opened fire, the Innies didn't have the luxury of foresight and an A.I, they were caught without cover, David fired a short burst from his MA5K, the rest of the team fired, Felix and Train were armed with BR85 Heavy Barrel Service Rifle, the Battle Rifle as it was more commonly known as, Becky was armed with a MA5D and was suppressing the Innies, Glory however was armed with a variation of the Light rifle, this particular model had been used against ancient Humans and was more effective at killing targets with a single shot compared to the variation used against the flood, to incorporate the ability to vaporize the targets the shot was less powerful, they were still effective but she preferred this variation.

The Innies recovered their wits enough to find some limited cover, a couple jumped back round the corner, others ran for a door frame closer to the ODSTs, David growled as shoved himself into the frame as far as he could, the AP rounds would tear him apart and he really didn't feel like becoming confetti, he leant out and fired another burst and watched as the bastard fell to the ground, bleeding from multiple wounds to her inadequately armoured chest, he counted the number of bodies on the ground, five of them were now dead, that left six to deal with,

"Glory move up and get a better cover, we'll cover you! Train as soon as she moves, you move to her spot, Felix go follow Glory after Train gets to you," David yelled, Echo responded by firing blindly at the Innies while Glory used her speed and agility to use, Train moved quickly between his cover and Glory's previous cover, when he reached it he tapped Felix twice on the shoulder signalling him to move, which he promptly did so.

The Innies however soon responded with their own suppressive fire, allowing a few of them to move up, one of them got a little too ahead of himself and paid the price as Glory lashed out with powerful punch, cracking the poor man's skull in the process, her shields flared as incoming fire was directed at her, she lept back into cover, firing as she did, one of the bolts hit a man square in the face causing half of his face to blow apart, brain and skull fragments littered his comrades and the wall behind him,

The remaining five hesitated a second before continuing their assault with renewed vigour, fragments of the metal wall and bulkhead exploded out as bullets imbedded themselves into the metal, Becky gritted her teeth as metal shards rained down on her as AP rounds struck the bulkhead near her heads previous location, she sank as low as possible until she was almost prone before she leant out and fired a burst at the offending Innies who screamed as the 7.62x51mm FMJ-AP rounds tore through the man's chest, leaving his insides a mangled mess of organic tissue.

Philip was unfortunately unable to help shoot the Innies and take back his ship; instead he was forced to let the ODSTs have the 'honour' of killing the traitors, he could hear another Innies scream in pain as he to the floor, only three were left now and the ODSTs would take advantage over the lesser trained men.

Indeed just a few more minutes the fire fight was over, the Insurrectionist forces lay dead in their own blood, the hallway stank

of gunpowder and blood, some of the Innies killed by Glory's weapon were torn apart which left bones and organs exposed, it was a gruesome sight and a reason Philip had joined the Navy so he wouldn't see his enemies corpses staring back at him with lifeless eyes that still showed the persons last emotion.

"Yep, you guys are on cleaning this up afterwards, no way am I making my crew suffer any more than they already have done," Philip joked weakly, it was dry humourless joke that seemed to signify that fight had indeed ended,

"Fine by me Commander, as long as we through Skye out of an air lock and I get to push the button," David replied,

"Not if I get the fucker first you won't," Philip growled, the man's timing was ridiculous, it seemed as though he wanted Humanity to fight another war against an alien conglomerate, although it would make sense, a weakened UNSC would be easier to break free from but if the UNSC kept hold of its rebellious colonies after The Great War than whichever faction Skye supported were truly stupid in believing it would work.

"Commander, I have contacted the Daedalus and have reported our situation, Admiral Morrison will be sending a Marine forces on board to assist you in retaking the Sevenfold, they should be here within a few moments," Lorelie broke the silence that had settled in, true to her words the Sevenfold rumbled as docking points from the Daedalus' latched onto the Destroyer,

"Come on let's move to the bridge before things get too out of hand, if we're lucky Sky will realise it's over and surrender," the Commander said,

"He's just as likely to shoot everyone out of spite," David replied grimly, causing the group to move through the halls to the bridge,

"Commander, Skye is gettingâ€¦ desperate, when Marine forces from the Daedalus started boarding he has the crew on the bridge at gun point, he's hiding behind our own people," Lorelie reported, Marine forces had stacked up along the way to the Bridge, a Marine Captain met with them,

"Commander, Lieutenant, glad you could make it; the Admiral just gave us the go, Commander, you'll have to stay back," the Captain told him,

A couple of Marines stayed back with the Commander as the rest of them barged through the bridge a few minutes after the Commander and Echo team arrived, Philip was around the corner just in case things went south, he heard several long bursts of rifle fire and the shouts and screams before he heard what sounded like a standoff between Skye and the Marines.

Philip let his anger get the better of him; he stormed forward towards the bridge, he could see that most of the bridge crew were still alive, tied up but alive, some however had been executed before the Marines could stop them, Skye was holding Lieutenant Vickers to his chest with a M6H pressed into her chin,

"SKYE!" Philip roared, "Drop the gun! It's over, you lost," Skye however did not drop the gun in fact he just pressed it tighter to the young Lieutenants chin,

"Stay back!" Skye roared back at the younger Commander, things were bad, he needed to end this now but he was limited for options, the Marine Captain was trying to persuade Philip to back off the bridge but his concern fell on deaf ears.

Flagship Indomitable, CIC, Other side of Relay 314, 2154 Citadel Standard

Septimus saw the view screen flick on, he saw Human soldiers wearing a different armour variant than the ones that escorted the Commander, they were all fighting other members that had some sort of weird clothing and armour, one of them wore a uniform similar to the Commanders, he was holding a younger looking human at gun point, they were yelling at each other, before anything else happened the Commander entered, his uniform was not the perfectly straight grey uniform, it was wrinkled and ripped in a couple places, blood and dirt had coated sections of grey uniform, his face was cut up slightly and his wrist was in some sort of caste type thing.

The Commander yelled something as he walked into the bridge and things seemed to heat up, yelling and the body language was tense, Septimus may not have understood what was being said but from the looks of it there had been a mutiny, a poorly planned and poorly timed mutiny. Just as things started to calm down one of the Humans in the new variant of armour opened fire on the man holding the hostage, a few rounds went straight through the man's head, crimson blood and brain matter sprayed the wall behind him, covering several work stations and the younger officer in the dark red substance.

He quickly shut off the comm before turning back to Desolas who had a similar look of surprise on his face, indeed this new race seemed to be full of surprises and not all of them were good.

* * *

><p>AN; okay when i was writting the original AN it glitched out and didn't save so i'm a little annoyed about that as it was really long, i replied to the following people; Chronus1326, Guest(hater), MatthewG, Axcel, Natzo and Officer Hot-Pants those with accounts PM me and i'll send you what i tryed to write earlier, those without i'll sum up;**

Gorgon class destroyers don't have two MAC's they only have one, the Cole protocol hadn't even been started by 2531 so saying it was in effect in 2526 is silly and i really wish that was true Axcel but i didn't come to the same conclusion, it would have been cool if it were true, also you're right about them not conquering but running and that was a mistake on my part.

I would like to thank all of you who have reviewed, Favorited and followed, it really means a lot to me, thank you all a whole tonn ;)

**A/N; So hey wassup? i thought i might update this story for you guys and girls... i assume there are girls reading this somewhere.
**

Okay word of warning; the Chief makes an appearance but i really really underplay him, thought id warn you before hand. a few questions have been answered in this chapter.

okay i have had a little bit of flack for this story off of people regarding multiple things, usually really little things and if you have a problem with it... hit the back button, no one is forcing you to read the story.

* * *

><p>UNSC _**Sevenfold**_**, Interstellar Space, Captains Quarters, 1704 Ship board time, August 20****th**** 2587**

Philip laid his head on the table, both his hands running through the hair on the back of his head, he just wanted to hide in hole and die, everything in his life seemed to go wrong; from his parents splitting up to the Gorgon incident last year and now this. Nearly forty crew members were dead, many injured and it was all for some stupid ass plan to arm the Insurrectionists with more recent technology.

The door to his quarters opened with a slight hiss causing the young Commander to look up; before him stood Admiral Morrison, his large form blocking out the view into the hallway behind him, Philip stood up and saluted the high ranking officer, his Naval carer was already shot to hell but he wasn't going to show any form of disrespect to the old Admiral.

"Sit down Walters, jeez you're a mess," the Admiral said as he walked into the room, Philip collapsed into his chair, indeed the Commander was a mess, his hair was all over the place and he had haunted look in his eyes,

"Look Walters I'll say this before Lasky can when we meet up with him; what happened here today was not your fault, you had no way of knowing what Skye would do." Morrison took a seat opposite Philip and leant on the table, Philip had nothing to say; he just hung his head low and gazed down at the floor,

"I've been speaking to Lorelie about a few things and we might be in a spot of trouble," Morison continued, Philip looked up at his superior, "It appears that our new alien compatriots witnessed Skye's mutiny or at least the Marines storming the bridge, one of the bodies fell back onto the Comm station and activated it when they were hailing you, they disconnected the call after Skye went down, Lorelie was unable to do anything; just in case the aliens took it as a hostile action," Philip was shocked, the Turian General had witnessed everything and now chances were that the aliens would really consider themselves above Humanity.

"I took the liberty of speaking to the 'Turian' General via text, turns out we both want the same thing; Retake Shanxi and kill the four eyed bastards responsible, he agreed to move his fleet to the RV point, than we plan our joint attack and go get Shanxi back, there were other things butâ€| that's above your pay grade," Morison

finished,

"Now, clean yourself up, can't have you looking like that while on duty Commander" Morison added before getting up and leaving, Philip sighed once more before getting up to go shower, his chest was still sore from the crash but the medical technicians had done what they could.

The day just got longer and longer in his opinion.

XX

Flagship **_Indomitable,**_** CIC, En Route to Human RV point, 1300hrs ship board time, August 21****st**** 2587/2154**

Septimus was pacing the CIC, the Human Admiral he had spoken to had not answered the questions he sought the answers to but had just simply informed the General that it was a 'long story', but the entire joint Council fleet was currently heading towards the staging point for the Human fleet, from there he would personally meet with the Admiral in charge of the fleet and together along with other high ranking officers they would plan for the liberation of the Human colony, it was daunting, he would be making first contact with a high ranking official and be planning a planetary siege.

"Two minutes till we drop out of FTL sir," one of his officers reported, Septimus sighed before replying,

"Good, as soon as we do bring us next to the Human Flagship, the Admiral informed me that it was quiteâ€œ obvious as to which one it was," the Lieutenant replied with a 'yes sir' before focusing on his console,

Soon enough the two hundred ship strong Council fleet dropped out of FTL, the sight before the experienced General caused him to open his mandible in shock, there were over _six hundred_ ships, none of which were smaller than a Cruiser, there were three other ships the same size as the _Daedalus_ at four kilometres and at least six that were just over three kilometres long, but the truly gargantuan vessel at the centre of the fleet was what caught his attention; it was _huge_, it had to have been at least five kilometres maybe five and a half. All the armour plating on the ship rested at particular angles, some of them overlapped and other hung over the side.

He noticed that some ships looked nothing like the Human designs, they were a minority amongst the fleet but they stuck close to the Flagship, acting as guards for the massive vessel, all the ships however had a silver look to them, like they were made from something far more advanced than anything the Council could come up with, it wasn't true but the way the angles and the way the metal lookedâ€œ it made the ships look impressive.

"Have Captains Afera and Schells meet me in the hanger, we'll all go together," Oraka said even though he was already on his way out of the CIC, "and have General Desolas meet me in the hanger bay," he added as the doors to the CIC closed behind him.

Septimus and Desolas met in the hanger at the same time and made idle chit-chat concerning the new aliens they would be fighting with; the Humans had an impressive fleet that was for sure, they were waiting

for Afera and Schells before they headed over to the Human Flagship, a squad of some of Desolas' best were waiting nearby in heavy armour, soon two shuttles entered the hanger bay and Afera and Schells joined the two Turian Generals,

"Generals, good news, my men have finished a translator upgrade to allow easier communication with our new allies," Captain Schells said as soon as he was close enough, Septimus nodded,

"Good, that will make things run smoother," Oraka said before moving off towards the shuttle that would take them to the Super-Dreadnought, the two Captains and Desolas followed along with the squad of Turian soldiers, the shuttle ride was quick but he and Desolas kept talking about their plans with Afera and Schells making the odd contribution.

* * *

><p>Shuttle en route to Human Flagship UNSC Infinity,

Lieutenant Adrian Victus fidgeted slightly in his seat, thanks to his armour it went unnoticed, he was slightly nervous at the prospect of being on a ship that dwarfed the Destiny Ascension which had a crew of ten thousand, he didn't want to even guess at the number of crewmen on the massive vessel, that and the fact that there were hundreds of point defence guns pointing at the small shuttle, he quickly tucked away the nerves and remembered his training, he was part of the Victus family, war was in his blood, he would be fine, or at least he prayed to the Spirits he would be.

As the shuttle drew closer to the ship he went over his gear one last time before getting a reassuring pat on the shoulder by his CO, Captain Fedorian,

"It'll be fine Victus, they're friendly, for now anyway," his CO reassured him, Adrian nodded in response, the shuttle was completely closed, preventing him from seeing the hanger they were approaching, he did however feel the shuttle slow down and the tug of artificial gravity inside the huge hanger bay, his squad stood up and would be the first ones to exit the shuttle.

The shuttle door opened and the squad fanned out, they didn't do anything that could be considered hostile but they kept their guard up just in case, Victus was impressed with what he saw, two separate lines of 'Humans' acted as some sort of honour guard, their armour was polished, their movements were in perfect synchronisation, they were a highly trained group that was for sure, as the Generals and Captains came out of the shuttle their honour guard snapped to attention, the sound of their boots hitting the floor and their rifles coming to rest on their shoulders was an impressive one.

As his squad slowly stood at ease he noticed four Humans at the end, one was dressed in the grey uniform that the human Commander had worn when coming aboard the Indomitable, only it was more ornate, it had slightly more golden trimmings and had an extra piece on one shoulder, another was dressed similarly but it had different markings and lacked the shoulder piece, the other was different, it was taller and wore some sort of armour, it had small bits floating over its shoulders and soft blue lights softly pulsing through it, it had

a certain edge of superiority to it, like it was saying '_I'm bigger, better and more powerful than you'_, the last one was taller than the two in the grey uniform but smaller than the one in the fancy armour, it too wore armour only this one was dark green and its face was covered by a solid golden visor, General Oraka moved forward first and Fedorian motioned for the squad to follow along with the rest of their delegation.

Adrian had seen the Human Commander when he visited but the humans in the honour guard all looked different, none looked even similar, some had dark skin, others had really pale skin, some were tall, others were short but they all looked to be of the same fitness level, not that he could really tell, they were after all completely alien, the human at the centre with the ornate uniform looked older, his fur was grey with slight hints of brown in it, his face was wrinkled but he had the look of a hardened war veteran, he had seen the look on the Generals and on his own farther, only the look the human put out was a little softer, although Adrian had a feeling that it was because of their softer skin.

The human took a step forward to meet General Oraka and stretched out its hand, to his surprise the General either knew the gesture or made a lucky guess as he reached out with his own hand,

"General Oraka? I'm Admiral Thomas Lasky, Commander of the UNSC Infinity, it's a pleasure General," the man's voice, at least Adrian assumed it was a man, was surprisingly friendly,

"The pleasure is mine Admiral, I see you've managed to sort out a translator than," Oraka replied, the Human Admiral smiled,

"Yes well, we have been working on it since you sent the data package to the Sevenfold," he replied, "Now, I think it would be best to make our way over to the ready room and introduce ourselves properly and then do what we came here to do,"

"Agreed Admiral, lead the way," Septimus said, the Human Admiral took a step back, straightened his features before dismissing the present soldiers, who in turn saluted before turning and marching off in an orderly fashion, some guards however stayed nearby, presumably to make sure nothing happened to the Admiral, they were lead from the hanger bay through a confusing series of corridors that were marked with signs that they couldn't read, eventually they were lead into a small tram, a high speed rail network inside a warship was something Adrian had a hard time believing but at the same time he wasn't surprised considering the size of the ship, after several minutes of rather awkward silence the tram slowed ad stopped, allowing its passengers out into the new section of the ship,

When they reached the ready room Adrian looked around, the room was large enough for all of them and then some, a large monitor filled the wall to the right of the door its dark screen had a symbol rotating, he had seen the same symbol painted on the side of every Human warship and on all of the crewmen's uniforms, he figured it was the symbol of their military,

The Humans walked round to the other side of the table and sat down; their guards stood against the wall with their weapons holstered but ready, Fedorian motioned for the squad to do the same as the Generals, Admirals and Captains sat down at the table, Adrian took

note of an empty chair on the Humans side and that all other chairs had been removed,

"So, General Oraka, I suppose we should introduce ourselves properly; I am Admiral Thomas Lasky, CO of the Infinity and in charge of all UNSC forces during the liberation of Shanxi, to my right is Major General Nicolas Strauss," he said pointing at the other man in similar attire, indicating the next man the one in green armour and continued, "This here is Captain-117, he is in charge of the few Spartans we have alongside Companies; Ambrose, Charlie and Gypsy, the last man here is in charge of all Forerunner forces within our fleet," the Admiral finished,

"Forerunner?" Desolas asked, as he studied the 'Forerunner', the golden energy covering its face made it impossible to read the facial expressions of the creature behind it,

"Aya," the Forerunner murmured before the energy dissipated and the armour around its head reoriented into the shoulder and neck pieces, its face was definitely not human, its skin colour was different, its facial structure was more rugged and it had some sort glands on the side of its face, it was in Adrian's opinion an ugly creature, its almost rigid face was covered in pinkish grey skin, it had no pronounced nose, instead it had two slitted nostrils, it also had pale bluish white fur on the back of its head,

"I am a Forerunner," It said simply, "My name is Victory Through Honour, Forerunner Warrior-Servant, third form, most people call me Vic," he added, as Vic spoke he moved his hands allowing Adrian to get a good look at them, they were large with six fingers, two of which were opposable thumbs, Adrian couldn't fathom having that many fingers on one hand,

"You also mentioned 'Spartans', might I inquire as to what exactly a Spartan is," Schells asked, Captain 117 answered,

"Spartans are the best humanity has to offer, we are the best soldiers in the galaxy, the rest is classified," he answered, Captain Schells frowned slightly but said nothing,

The General took the time to introduce himself, Desolas, Captain Schells and Afera, along with some general background information as to why his group was here and general galactic history, however the talk raised a few eyebrows on the Human side when the Geth were mentioned along with the subsequent ban on A.I Technology, Captain Afera noticed the looks that crossed the Human Admirals face,

"Admiral Lasky is there a problem?" she inquired, he looked slightly uncomfortable when replying,

"Just the talk of A.I's isâ€¦ well let's just say humans aren't so afraid of " he said, it quickly dawned on the Turian Generals and Salarian Captain what he meant, Afera however didn't seem to click,

"I am afraid I do not understand Admiral," she said with a slight frown on her face,

"Humans have used A.I technology for around five hundred years, we

haven't had a single incident involving A.I's in that entire time," the Admiral replied,

"Are you insane? A.I's are dangerous; they would wipe out all organics if given the chance!" General Desolas hissed at the Human Officers, Adrien winced ever so slightly at the Generals tone, before Lasky could reply however a new voice filled the room along with an orange-yellow avatar of a human in strange looking clothes,

"Actually the way we're created makes us ratherâ€| dependant on our makers, also we think like our creators, just better, what with all your funny organic-ness to slow you down," it said, Adrian tensed as did the rest of the Council species,

"Roland! Don't be so melodramatic," the Admiral chided with a frown, "Attitude aside A.I's are not hell bent on our destruction, we haveâ€| ways to prevent such things in all our A.I programs, isn't that right Roland?" he continued with a slight smirk, the A.I's avatar spun round to face the Admiral with a look of horror on its projected face,

"Hey, no fair, she was an evil old lady," the A.I replied,

"She was also one of the leading figures in A.I development," the admiral faced Oraka again, Captain Schells was typing away rapidly on his Omni-tool while muttering things to himself,

"General Oraka I can assure you it won't be a problem, there are two types of A.I my people use; Roland here is what is known as a 'smart' A.I; created by mapping the human brain, along with other things that I couldn't even begin to understand and we have the A.I you see in front of you,"

"What is going to stop it from deciding to wipe out all organic life in the galaxy?" Desolas asked, to Adrien's surprise and the Generals Roland was the first to answer,

"Asimov's three laws of robotics implemented into my coding at my 'birth' prevents me from harming a human being, sure I could override the commands but I don't, I have no desire to kill the people who gave me life," it answered,

"And what is the 'three laws of robotics' exactly?" Schells asked,

"The three laws of robotics are as follows; a robot may not injure a human being or, through inaction, allow a human being to come to harm, a robot must obey the orders given to it by human beings, except where such orders would conflict with the First Law, a robot must protect its own existence as long as such protection does not conflict with the First or Second Laws." Roland said almost robotically,

"Yes, now how about we move on to the real reason you're here," Admiral Lasky said, Desolas looked like he was about to erupt but Septimus leaned over and whispered something to him causing him calm down slightly,

"Of course Admiral, our enemies are not going to kill

themselves,"

"Indeed, Roland is Commander Walters finished yet?" Lasky turned to his A.I, who nodded in the affirmative,

"Yes sir, he is outside the door right now,"

"Good, send him in," the door they walked through opened to reveal the Commander who walked, he slowed down with shock on his face, he hadn't been expecting to walk in halfway through a meeting, General Oraka stood up to greet the Commander,

"Ah Commander, it's good to see you in fighting shape," the General said, Adrian raised a brow plate at that, the General wasn't wrong either the Commander was dressed in a new uniform and his wrist still had a caste on it but he looked like he had when he visited the Indomitable,

"Ummmmâ€¦ yeah, thanks, I didn't realise I was interrupting the meeting Admiral," he said looking at the Admiral, almost like he was expecting help from the grey furred Human,

"I asked for you to be here Commander," the Admiral replied simply, Walters looked his superiors, his face was almost impassive but when he saw Captain 117, he couldn't hide the awe and excitement at meeting living legend, he snapped to attention,

"Sir!" he said crisply out of respect,

"At ease Commander," Lasky said motioning him to sit down; Philip felt out of his depth, he was surrounded by alien military officials a UNSC Admiral and a legendary war hero, he felt so small and insignificant,

"I didn't realise Commander Walters would be joining us," Captain Afera said, Walters looked at her and then at Lasky,

"Commander Walters is the only person in the UNSC to see action against these 'Batarians' and survive," Lasky commented, Afera nodded and gaped in realisation that the Commander had fought the Batarians, he had his memories stirred by the ship profiles that was why he had zoned out on them at the original meeting, they spent the next few hours discussing their plan of attack, while the Council forces didn't trust the A.I or the UNSC due their heavy use of A.I's they got along just enough to coordinate the siege,

The plan was relatively simple; four teams of Force Recon Marines from the 23rd ODST Force Recon Unit would make a covert drop into Batarian controlled ground via the Prowler Silent night and proceed to Shanxi's Reactor Complex which would disable the ground to space defences that had been set up along with the majority of the Batarians military capabilities, the A.I data core under the capital city and the last two were to clear out a small Batarian military camp which was to be used as the landing point for the majority of the UNSC and Council ground forces.

Once the Reactor complex was shut down and the A.I data core online again the Council forces along with the UNSC Infinity and battle group Dakota will drop out of FTL outside of weapons range, forcing the Batarians to move away from the planet, when they do Battle

groups York and Carolina will emerge from the dark side of the planet, using Shanxi's gravity to pick up speed along with a sling shot orbit of Galileo, a gas giant in the Shanxi-Theta system, using this the two battle groups will perform a 'fly by' on the Batarian fleet and the Super Carriers; Daedalus, Apollo, Sky Fall and Hurt Locker will jump into low atmosphere and start dropping the main invasion force and to provide air cover as they descend to their landing zones.

Spartan fire teams will be sent deep behind enemy lines to either capture or kill high ranking officials; Marine forces are tasked with taking the Capital city of Yamatai and surrounding towns, ODST forces will assist the marines except squads that are being tasked with liberating the slave labour camps that the Batarians set up.

General Desolas had insisted on having some of his men take part in these operations, Lasky and Strauss agreed reluctantly, although the extra man power was not unappreciated by the veterans, Turian fighter wings along with F-41 Exoatmospheric Multirole Strike Fighter or 'Broadswords' and F-99 Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicles or UCAV's will deploy to ensure air superiority and act as Close Air Support for ground forces.

Once the plans had been finalised the Turian Generals and their company took their leave, before leaving however Septimus decided to speak to Commander Walters, walking up to him as the rest of his group was preparing to leave along with the UNSC officials he cleared his throat to attract the younger aliens attention,

"Commander Walters I must express my condolences for the loss of your crewman during that rather untimely mutiny," he said, Philip was both shocked and saddened, good crew had been killed during that, he was shocked by the fact that an alien seemed to care,

"Yes well, iâ€¦ thank you General, I am sorry you saw that horrible view of us, you probably think we're nothing but a bunch of infighting space apes," He replied, Septimus chuckled slightly,

"Not at all Commander, your Admiral Morrison explained to me all about the 'Insurrection', know this Commander; the Hierarchy faced a similar problem in our early days, the Unification war was almost as bad but easier to deal with, no Turian will treat Humans badly for this civil war of yours," he said,

After that he left along with his entourage they were escorted back to their shuttle and Walters returned to the Sevenfold while Captain-117 returned to his men as did Vic, the Forerunner Commander.

* * *

><p>As General Oraka stepped back into the CIC of the Indomitable he ordered them to move away from the UNSC fleet and ordered all of his ships and men to prepare for the fight, many of the ground troops were to be transferred to the larger and more advanced UNSC Super Carriers that would take them into battle, except those partaking in the stealth mission prior to the invasion. He was still in shock over that; a four kilometre long ship should not only be impossible but to have it land in atmosphere was something he had been told repeatedly was impossible during his younger years.

He was in awe at the Humans although he would never admit it out loud, the fact that they had such large warships and a more advanced and unheard of method of FTL were things that would boost the Council's power, all the unreachable systems would be theirs for the taking and the Hierarchy would become a lot stronger than ever before, although he would recommend an alliance between the UNSC and the Hierarchy. His main concern however was their liberal use of A.I's, but at the same time they had said they had never had an issue with them in over four hundred years of using them so it was still up in the air so to speak, he wondered what the Council would try to do when they found out as he planned on 'forgetting' to mention it in his next report.

* * *

><p>Philip sat down in the command chair on the bridge of the Sevenfold, the stains of Skye's failure had been washed off and he was still waiting for the rest of the replacement crew to arrive, it would still be a few days before they were given the go ahead by the Force Recon Marines but they would still have to wait for the Council forces to arrive at Shanxi first, he rolled his head and sighed as his neck cracked slightly, it would be a long tour of duty, he knew that much for certain.

* * *

><p>AN; Axcel you asked me if Gorgon class vessels were the ones with six Ares missiles. the answer to that is no. the Gorgon was the first class of ship to have a MAC gun, the ones before that haven't actually been named class wise.**

I know this wasn't the best chapter of my story let alone on any story on the site but i still hoped you enjoyed it and i cannot express how grateful i am for all the support, i mean the story has 201 reviews, is in 7 communities, has over 300 followers and 190 favorites and has a grand total of 47,894 views as of the posting of this chapter, i really am thankful for all the support.

One last piece; would you like to see the Force Recon teams story as part of this or as a separate story or not at all?

9. Chapter 9

A/N; so here you go. up faster than other updates before so... have fun.

Disclaimer: Don't own anything.

* * *

><p>UNSC Colony World Shanxi, Shanxi-Theta system, September 18 2586

Adrien Victus wondered around the Human vessel known as the Sevenfold, it was the same ship that they had first encountered at the Relay. Captain Fedorian had insisted that it be Victus' squad that got sent aboard the sleek and angular warship.

He had been transferred not long before the Council fleets had jumped into FTL; he had been greeted by the Commander of the ship, Commander Walters, and had met his human counterpart, Lieutenant David Shepard, the Lieutenant had taken Victus' armour, along with his men's armour and had said they needed some 'upgrades'. He wasn't really all that bothered by it, it wasn't like it was the most advanced armour system in the Hierarchy, but that didn't mean he liked it.

He made his way to the mess hall where the rest of his men had gathered, it was one of the few places on the ship he was allowed access to. He entered to find the same sight he saw every time he entered; the Humans 'Marines' were sat in one section, the ships crewmen were in another and the ODSTs were in their own little section, his men were with them so he made his way over to them and sat down.

"So, Sargent you must have a few war stories to tell," the Human female asked, Sargent Vakarian was an old fashioned Turian and the human was grating on his nerves, Victus knew that Vakarian wants to transfer to C-Sec on the Citadel but his transfer had been postponed thanks to their current mission.

"I have plenty of stories to tell human, but I doubt you are mature enough to deal with such gruesome details," the Palaven born replied, the other Humans at the table looked at one another,

"Oh really now, Vakarian? There was this one time where we responded to a colony under attack by pirate forces; so in we go, a bog standard drop, now we're thinking it's just URF forces raiding for supplies so when we enter the main city all we find is bodies; everyone had been torn apart, some had been eaten alive, even children had been torn limb from limb. Turns out Jackals had raided the colony and decided to kill everyone, not their usual MO of in and out get what ya need type stuff." She said and it was one of many stories the ODSTs had under their belts.

"Hmm, fair enough, I'll give that one to you. Okayâ€|" and went on their conversation, the humans spoke to their Turian counterparts and Lieutenant Shepard was no different,

"So, Victus you got any family?" he asked, Adrian did indeed have family, a wife and a son on the way, and he said as much,

"Cool, got a wife and a daughter myself back on Earth, after this tour of duty I'm taking a nice safe job groundside and I'm gonna send time with my daughter, I don't see her all that much, missed a lot of special moments," he said, Victus knew what he meant, his own father had been away for most of his childhood, all ways one more enemy to fight, one more base to raid that was until he did return home, where he was laid to rest.

They spent the rest of their time on the ship talking, getting to know each other; they all wanted to know and to be able to trust the people watching their backs in combat, although Glory had chosen to stay out of the majority of their conversations until Felix and Train as they were known as, grabbed her and made her watch a sport game with them and got her join them all during meals and spare time, usually by dragging her while she threw out curses at them but if she really wanted to she could have easily shrugged them off and walked away.

They were all spending time near the bottom of the ship where the ODSTs deployed from, they were all engaged in idle conversation when the Commander walked in, sure the dark skinned man, Train or Eugene, was tall but the Commander was taller still; he stood slightly taller than Adrien and slightly wider at the shoulders, he was skinny though, it was odd look.

"Right, I'm sure your time together has been fun and all but it's time to get serious; we drop out in an hour, you drop in three, understood?" he said, at their affirmative nods he left, leaving them to getting ready.

"Well we better armour up, follow me," Shepard said before leading them to the ships armoury where weapons were neatly stacked along with crates of ammo, he led them to a row of lockers with a single bench running down the middle, the lockers were full of armour and weapons,

"Okay, Echo you know where your stuff is so armour up," he said, "Boys here are your lockers, they got your armour in it already so don't worry 'bout that," he continued as he showed them five lockers side by side, inside each was their armour, except it had a new paint job and some other new features,

"Okay so your probably wondering what I had done to your armour, so I'll tell ya; we had the under suit improved to allow a Kinetic dampening gel layer to fit in, that means you won't become a pile of mush when we drop. The second thing is improved software, we added an on board computer for you along with a VISR system into the helmet, last but not least is the Titanium-ceramic plating which protects you from most small arms, also added some thermal insulation so you don't become baked Turians in less than twenty minutes. Any question?" he rattled off as he opened all the lockers for them,

"Yeah, a couple; what's a 'VISR'?" asked Vakarian, the human Lieutenant gave a smile before replying, "It's stands for Visual Intelligence System, Reconnaissance. It's simple: if you see green, squad up, if you see red, shoot. Next?"

"What do you mean 'Baked Turian'?" Victus asked this, "Ah, we'll get to that during your crash course in SOEIV's" David replied,

After seeing no more questions from Adrien's team David left to get ready himself, they slowly put on the new suits and when they were done he noticed it was a lot lighter than he thought, it also felt like a second skin rather than heavy armour, it was nice though.

As he finished he noticed the humans had already geared up and left except for the Lieutenant who was just tightening his chest plate, when he finished he motioned for them to follow him to the drop-bay where the other humans had gathered around a table with a holographic presentation on it.

Adrien took a brief moment to look over the Humans in their battle gear, it was all shaped the same but the Lieutenant had dirty yellow highlights across the chest, helmet and shoulders with what appeared to be the bottom half of a skull under the visor and two attachments on the top and side of the helmet although what function they possessed was unknown to the Turian. Sargent Coulson's armour had Red

highlights and had extra plating nearly everywhere, her legs had thick plates of armour along with what looked like ammo wrapped around one leg.

The other two wore identical armour, both with blue highlights and thick shoulder plates. The only way to tell them apart was that 'Felix' had a strange attachment on his helmet while 'Train' had none.

"Right so, what's the mission Lorelie?" David asked as he moved forward to the table, "You are being deployed to the town of Himiko, near the Capital. You along with the rest of Echo Company are to remove any Batarian presence from the town, any questions Lieutenant?" Lorelie said as she materialised on the corner of the table and a small town formed in the centre.

"Rules of engagement?" he asked,

"Brass has given the old fashioned order of 'if it's alien, shoot it'. Barring allies of course." The A.I said, nodding to the Turians present at the last bit.

"What about the terrain?" Adrien asked, it was a village and it would be fairly small lines of fire but he wanted to know everything about the place, it might very well save his life.

"An old fashioned French style village, the buildings are made of stone and wood, dirt roads and even an old style Church in the town centre, it's all a bit silly really considering the Japanese and Chinese heritage of the planet." The A.I replied to him, he may not have trusted it but it was useful he guessed.

"What's so important about one village?" Coulson asked she chewed the end of an unlit cigar, she was frowning, he noted with a slight hint of amusement,

"It's a backdoor, a way into the city away from the frontlines," Adrien said as he looked at the topographic map, the village was in the centre and the a road stretched from the city through the village and beyond,

"Exactly, not only that but the main bulk of the Batarian military forces is located thirty clicks south of the village, which will be where we will counter them when the move to retake the city," the A.I said, Victus took some time to study the village on the display; it was divided into two by a small river, a single bridge was all that connected the two halves and a building with a tower on one end sat near the river, from what he had been told a 'Church' was a place of worship for many Humans, Religion wasn't as common among them now, apparently too many had simply stopped believing in any form of god.

For another half hour by human standards they talked about the mission, expected resistance and so forth, but when Adrien felt the need to bring up the question of 'baked Turian' again, this time Shepard decided to answer and from the rather evil looking grin he sported Adrien had a bad feeling about what he had just asked. Shepard pointed to a pod like thing nearby.

"That there is a Single Occupant Exoatmospheric Insertion Vehicle or

SOEIV for short, it's made of titanium-A, lead foil and ceramic skin. Most of the pods bulk is simple heat protection during atmospheric entry," he said but most of the words went over Adrien's head after 'Exoatmospheric Insertion' a drop from orbit in a metal coffin, surely the human was joking.

"You have got to be joking; no way would any sane being do such a thing, an orbital drop? In a tiny little pod?" Shepard smiled widely,

"Oh yeah, nothing quite like dropping in from orbit, now get your men over there I need to give you a crash course in orbital drops so get to," he ordered, while Adrien didn't like taking orders from anyone but his own command and he was technically the same rank as Shepard, the human had command of the two teams while Victus would act as a second in command.

They spent the remaining time learning the basics of an orbital drop. Adrien could feel the ship accelerate beneath him, all the while take them closer and closer to enemy forces and to where they would drop. He was still unsure of this particular method of transport but he had little choice now that they were so close.

An alarm bleared and the lights went off, leaving them all bathed in dark red emergency lighting. "Alright boys, you know the music, time to dance." David said over the alarms. The human squad moved to a weapons rack nearby while David showed the Turians where their weapons had been kept.

Victus watched as Felix took a large rifle with a scope and a smaller weapon about the size of Adrien's own assault rifle and a bulky looking sidearm, Train took an assault rifle and sidearm and a large silver and orange weapon that looked similar to the Forerunners armour. Coulson took a larger assault rifle that bore a similar design to the ones used by Train and Felix while Shepard took a completely different weapon; it was sleek and dark and had a scope but was too small to be a sniper rifle.

"Becks, you fill up everyone's packs with same cartridge ammo?" Shepard asked,

"Yes, sir, except for the Felix's S3 and Train's M45." She replied in her strange accent, she was an odd character Adrien thought; she nearly always had a witty comment for everything, she was almost always found smoking something she had called a 'Sweet Williams' although the smell was far from sweet. Not only that however but she never called someone by their names, instead she gave them nicknames like his was Birdy while Vakarian had been named 'Blue Raptor' although the humans often shortened that to simply 'Blue'.

"Good, means we can share ammo if need be. Victus, get your men in their pods, we drop in five!" David said, was it just him or did the Human sound happy about that?

So following his orders like a good soldier Adrien seated himself inside the cramped pod, when the lid came down he realised that there was a window that ran from the top of the lid to the bottom, two screens came to life and showed Lieutenant Shepard and Sargent Vakarian, both had their helmets on and their faces covered by their visors.

"I really don't like the fact that this thing has windows." Vakarian mumbled slightly, as the pods shifted their position and the grated metal floor fell away to the sides and a large door slowly opened up beneath them. Adrien looked down and saw the slight twinkling of stars at the very edge of his view and directly beneath him sat the human colony world of Shanxi. He could see the large tethers that reached down to the Capital city. Such a feat had been declared far too expensive to invest in so no one ever did, except humans it seems.

"Okay troopers, we are green and very, very mean!" David said over the Coms,

"We're dropping into hell ladies; it's time to grow a pair!" Sargent Coulson added, although he felt that it was mainly aimed at him and his men who were still voicing their concerns about this.

Various voices came in through their Coms as the entire battalion was doing their last minute checks; a red light appeared inside the pod along with a tone, followed by another and then another. When Adrien realised that it was a count down the red light became green and the tiny little pods lurched as magnetic accelerators and an internal rocket boosted it away from the Sevenfold and towards what he was certain would be his incredibly hot death.

* * *

><p>UNSC Colony World Shanxi

The Sevenfold and all other ships in Battle group York entered Shanxi's orbit and at full burn they headed round the planet where the Council forces along with Battle group Dakota would have drawn the Batarians away from the planet and allowing the other two Battle groups to get in behind their lines and let loose. He was glad that the Sevenfold was part of battle group York as it would allow many of the crew to vent their frustration on the four eyed bastards.

As the battle group came round the horizon he could see the distant flashes of light as ships fired and took fire in return. Some of the smaller Council ships were outright destroyed. The Valiant-class Cruiser leading the battle group sent over firing solutions and took control of the MAC guns and Energy Projector as they got closer and closer.

On his display Philip saw multiple lines form between York and the Batarian fleet, more lines showed the firing lanes of Battle group Carolina. The forty ships escorting the Infinity were taking the brunt of the fire as their shields were far more advanced than the simple ones used by Council forces.

"ODSTs are away Commander," a Lieutenant reported as they neared their targets. When they were in position the Valiant-Class Cruiser Fuji in command of Battle group York had given the order to fire, two bright flashes and the dimming of the lights on the bridge indicate the MACs being fired. His display showed nearly three hundred MAC rounds heading towards the enemy fleet, nearly all of them hit their targets and some even passed through into a second target. As the Batarian forces turned to face the new threat on their flanks Battle group Carolina made their appearance and fired all

their weapons into the Batarians exposed backs.

Sure enough the remaining Batarian ships were turned into debris, most pieces no bigger than a small car. But something was off, Philip couldn't explain it. The battle had been too easy. Everything he had learnt in school, of his dad and in OCS had told him Humans never did this well in space combat. Last year had proven it for him on the Gorgon. He sighed silently and watched for even the slightest hint of anything that would explain why it had been so easy. But none came. The combined fleet moved into a defensive orbit while the Super-Carriers descended to let loose an army that wanted revenge and freedom for their people.

* * *

><p>Adrien felt his stomach fly into his throat and his lungs compress as the G-forces piled up. The pod entered Shanxi's atmosphere and started to burn causing the temperature inside to rise but the 'upgrades' to his armour quickly rectified his discomfort and kept his body at a stable temperature.</p>

The drop seemed to last forever, the ground was reluctant to rise up and greet him, for which he was thankful. At around thirty thousand feet the pods main chute opened and he was forced into the seat and against the safety harness which was too tight to begin with due to his larger chest.

The pod hit the ground with a thud and he felt like he was about to throw up his entire chest cavity. Sure he was glad to have survived but he never wanted to do that again in his life. He would file his complaint to the Generals later but right now he had more pressing issues. He had enemies to kill.

* * *

><p>AN; so Review? please? anyway i read Silentium yesterday aaannnddd... I KNEW FORERUNNERS SURVIVED! just not in the way i thought or who or anything else. but seriously in an extra bounus feature on halowaypoint there is a line spoken by a Forerunner-'We were always meant to stand side by side as brothers, Forerunners and Humans. not as enemies.' or something like that(it was late when i finished the book and than did the extra feature. **

I won't say anything else except that the Reapers and Forerunners can never exist in the same universe. well they could but it would be pushing the limits. so yeah Reapers were going to appear but now? i guess i'll have to use the other bad guy i was planning on using, except in a slightly different role. :(

Also last chapter i mention Force Recon Marines having their own story, well i won't be doing anything but someone did approach me asking if they could do it, i said yeah. so i'll let you all know when i hear something about that.

**Anyway- Review and i'll talk to you next chapter. **

10. Chapter 10

**A/N; okay here ya go, a little something for you. hopefully it's

good enough to meet your expectations.**

* * *

><p>UNSC Colony World Shanxi, Shanxi-Theta System, September 28, 2586

"Twenty seconds to RV point," Sargent Coulson's voice rung out on his radio, soon followed by Shepard's, Felix's and Train's. Adrien did the same, reporting how long it would take him to sprint to the RV point, as did the rest of his team. After stumbling out of the pod on shaky legs Adrien ran to cover as fire from Batarian weapons peppered his position, he fire back blindly and moved towards the RV point.

The RV point was a small single tiered building with a thatched roof located near the main road in the village. As he neared it his helmet showed friendly IFF tags inside where Shepard, Coulson and Vakarian were waiting. Moving up he entered the building and came face to face with three rifle barrels, he tensed until they lowered as his comrades recognised him, Coulson gave a disapproving grunt and took cover by a window, Vakarian gave a small nod and did the same at a different window while Victus spoke to the Lieutenant,

"Where's everyone else?" Adrien asked,

"Still on the way. We wait here for them to arrive and then move, the four eyed bastards are going to be looking for us so keep an eye out," Shepard replied as he took cover by the broken door, the place had been abandoned decades ago and the wear and tear was obvious in the small building. Adrien took a quick look round and noted that it used be a small shop of some sort.

After another twenty seconds Felix arrived followed by Train and Glory who was then followed by the rest of Adrien's squad, Shepard was about to order them to move out when Coulson interrupted him with a loud whisper,

"Enemy movement, twenty plus foot mobiles, no vehicles." Shepard motioned for them all to get to cover, Shepard waited for the Batarians to get closer before opening fire, the Batarian regulars were issued with less than effective armour and no shields and they went down quickly, torn apart by the armour piercing ammo used as standard issue in UNSC weapons.

* * *

><p>David reloaded his DMR and motioned for his men to stand at ease, the Turians were good; he would give them that, the adapted quickly enough to become honorary ODSTs but they also seemed to stick to their ingrained training, like they didn't want to adapt.<p>

"Victus, take your team to the other side of the road, we'll move up in two teams." Shepard ordered, he saw Victus move to the other side of the road, keeping in cover the entire time, "Train you're on point," he said and the large man moved forward. Echo team was tasked with removing any hostiles in the village, a simple enough task as the village was small and hostile presence was minimal according to the drones. It would be a cake walk.

"Hey El-Tee, how come the village is still smashed up? I mean why they didn't bother fixing it, it looks like a war zone." Becky whispered as they moved down the road, going building to building. "Guess they didn't feel like it was important enough to bother fixing it," he replied, "And it is a war zone Becks," he added.

They swept through the village building by building until they came to the Church, the grave yard out side had been desecrated a the building itself looked like it had seen better days, weeds and moss grew up the walls and roof tiles had fallen down, leaving holes in the slanted roof.

Victus moved up next to him by the large wooden doors, "Victus stay here while we circle round back and enter through the side door, hit them from both sides," Glory and Shepard led the way to the back once in position Glory would knock the door down and David would throw the concussion grenades. "On my mark," David said into the Com, "Threeâ€|Twoâ€|Oneâ€|MARK!" Glory kicked the door down and David threw the grenades, seconds later loud bangs exploded through the door and blasted out a small window in the room.

David rushed into the room with his weapon up and he shot a Batarian that was trying to regain his wits, he was closely followed by Becky, Train, Glory and Felix bringing up the rear. There were two other Batarians in the small room, both of which were mowed down in seconds, David and Echo quickly swept the rest of the church of hostiles while Victus and his men cleared the main hall.

The total time it took them to sweep the village was around two hours, not bad for being outnumbered in enemy territory. The rest of the invasion was going well, they could see the city in the distance as AA fire rose up at UNSC drones and fighters that were harassing the alien defenders, one of the UNSC Super-Carriers, the SkyFall, lowered itself into the atmosphere, dark clouds formed under it as the air pressure changed. Most of the AA fire turned to concentrate on the four kilometre ship, only to splash harmlessly against its golden shield.

"Impressive," Victus said as he stood next to David outside the church, watching the battle from afar, "Yep," was David's simple reply. The rest of the team seemed to relax as well, Becky lit up a cigar and lent against the church wall, Train and Felix compared kills with the two other members of Victus' group while Vakarian fiddled with his sniper rifle.

"_Lieutenant, what your status?" David's radio suddenly came to life, "Village is secure Captain, just waiting for the regulars to show up so we can move into the city, sir." He replied, "Uhhâ€| Negative Lieutenant, Drones have spotted an emergency back-up generator near your location, I need you to take that facility Lieutenant." _

"I thought the Recon teams took out the Generators, Sir," David replied with a frown, "They did but we missed the secondary generators on the first sweep. Looks like the four eyed fucks built backups just in case we did come knocking. Take that facility out Lieutenant before they charge up any defence cannons."_

"Understood, sir. Send us the coordinates and we'll get it done,"

David said, his TACPAD flashed as the Captain sent the location of the base, the base was less than four hours away by foot, which they were forced to do.

* * *

><p>They had spent a few more minutes to themselves before heading towards the Batarian built base, the journey was uneventful, just marching across the land and they could hear the battle for the capital city from where they were.<p>

The base itself was mostly underground, a single building was the only indication that it was there, and the large power readings coming from beneath the surface. The structure was dull grey and yellow, an odd combination. It was only two maybe three stories high and had a single entrance, two squads of Batarian regulars patrolled the perimeter and a single sniper was stationed on the roof.

Felix and Vakarian set up nearby to cover the team as they entered the facility. Victus took his team to intercept one of the patrols while David and Echo set an ambush for the other, "Felix, on my mark take out the sniper," David said into the TeamCom, "Roger," the sniper whispered. As the enemy patrol entered the ambush site David began an internal countdown, threeâ€¢ twoâ€¢ oneâ€¢ "Mark!"

The loud 'Crack' of the S3 sniper rifle was the signal for both teams to wipe out the Batarian patrols, a quick and easy move for the Special Forces veterans. They rendezvoused at the entrance to the building.

Planting the C-12 on the door Becky stood back, she had placed enough explosives to burn a hole into the hull of the Infinity, a little over kill but she had no way of knowing how thick the door was. They all took cover behind the tree line as the C-12 detonated, the ground shook and shrapnel was thrown in nearly every direction.

David took point as they moved through the facility, running into squads of two or three regulars. He was beginning to wish for some Special Forces troops to show up and provide a challenge. "Victus take your men and clear the upper floors," David ordered as they reached a stairwell.

The control centre was situated on the ground floor but to shut down the generators for good they would need to blow the place into oblivion, David wanted to shut down the generators and then move through the lower levels of the facility in the dark, giving him and his team another advantage over the defenders.

David crouched by a corner in the hallway, Becky moved to take point, as she turned the corner three loud bangs from a shotgun caused Becky to jerk back; two rounds stuck her chest while the third stuck a glancing blow on her helmet, shattering the lower part of her visor. David grabbed her and pulled her to cover while Train pulled out an M9 grenade and threw it round the corner and Glory rushed round and opened fire on the injured Regulars.

David took off Becky's helmet and saw that parts of her visor had cut up her face, he slapped her across the face a couple of times, "Come on Becks, come on," he urged her to wake.

Her eyes snapped open and David sighed in relief, "Hey Dave? Piece of advice; don't get shot in the face with a shotgun," she joked as he helped her up, "That's usually a good idea Becks," he said back to her. She picked up her helmet and flicked the damaged visor, "Damn, this stuff really works," she whispered to herself, the helmet was too damaged to be of much use, she threw it off to one side and pulled out a hat with the UNSC logo on it, David threw her a questioning glance through his helmet's de-polarized visor, "What? You never know when you might need a hat," she said while pulling out one of her cigars and lighting it, "Plus I can totally pull off the 'badass Sargent with cigar and hat' look," she added.

"Come on," he said and his visor once again became opaque and he shouldered his weapon, he turned the corner to see Train holding up an injured Batarian against the wall while Glory kept watch for enemy reinforcements. "Seriously man? You could have hurt someone with that thing you stupid fuck, what type of idiot goes round using a shotgun if they don't know how to use it?" Train asked the Batarian, who had a look of defiance on his face, or what looked like defiance,

"Your people are nothing but slaves, how dare you attack us!" it hissed and David had to resist the urge to face-palm,

"Hey look here dipshit, in case you haven't noticed we're taking back our planet and rescuing our citizens, we've decimated your crappy little defence fleet and we're gonna decimate your crappy little army too, soâ€|" David yanked the Batarian out of Train's grasp and threw him to the floor where it tried to scramble for one of its friends weapons only to be shot in the back by David, "â€|we don't really have time for prisoners." David finished, looking at Train.

The rest of the topside facility was secured quickly and Victus met back up with them at the control centre, as Adrien walked in he noticed Becky had lost her helmet and had gained a new scar running from her cheek to beneath her lip. When she noticed him looking at her she offered a grin and said, "Shotgun to the face," as her way of explaining. He was actually relieved as for a moment he thought she would have said her usual line of 'Like what ya see?' when she caught him staring.

"Alright, I'm disabling power now so if you're afraid of the dark say so, if not activate your VISR." A chorus of 'okay's and yesses' answered him, except Becky who had lost hers with her helmet. "Okay Victus take one of your men and Becky to see if you can find us transport. The rest of you are with me clearing the lower levels." David ordered, Becky tried to protest but David wasn't having any of it.

The lower levels of the Facility were tight, the hallways were extremely narrow and combined with the dark it meant the under trained Regulars of the Batarian Army were dispatched of without too much trouble, some got off lucky shots and grazed David's armour, leaving scratches and dents in the armour plating and pretty nasty bruises on his arms and chest.

Upon entering the main reactor David immediately set to work on planting charges on anything that looked important, coolant pipes, flashing consoles, glowing things that did stuff David couldn't even begin to understand.

"Okay boys and girls let's get out of here before the charges go off," David said as they began to leave the reactor core, "_Sir you have got a whole bunch of bad guy's heading your way, thirty maybe forty plus foot mobiles with light armour attached, they're heading straight for the facility, ETA two minutes." _Felix reported from his position,

"Ah shit, Victus, Becky what's your status?" David asked, he had picked up his pace, he along with Glory, Train and the Turian ran through the pitch black halls, "_We found a vehicle depot, got a couple of 'Hogs in here," _ Becky reported, "_We're sending the waypoint now," _ she added and a little blue arrow appeared on his HUD, the vehicle depot was on the other side of the Facility, they would have Batarians on their six but they would just about make it.

"_El-Tee, Vakarian says he's spotted Batarian SpecOps in the mix, apparently these guys would quite happily rape your daughter while they gut your wife and torture you, all in the same room." _Felix reported and David regretted wishing for a better challenge.

As they neared the depot David could hear the sounds of enemy troops approaching, it was confirmed when a round flew past his helmet, missing by millimetres. "Go, go, go! Come on," he urged the men, they entered the depot and saw Victus, Becky and the other Turian by two old Warthogs, Becky was on the M41 LAAG while Victus and the other Turian stood near a flatbed version. As soon as they were clear of the doorway Batarian troops attempted to give chase, only to be cut down by 12.7x99mm AP rounds from the M41.

"Train get in the flatbed, you drive, Glory you take Train's cannon and get on the flatbed, Victus you're with me and Becky, the rest of you on the flat bed." David said as he jumped in the driver's seat while Victus clambered in next to him, "This is _really _uncomfortable, you know," Victus moaned as the seat was designed for humans, not Turians.

"Train you lead the way, we'll cover your six with the M41," David ordered, Train took the lead out of the depot and into a short tunnel which lead to a road. It wasn't long before the Batarians gave chase, either in old Warthogs or in their own light vehicles.

"Glory, see what you can do about those guys!" David shouted over the roar of gunfire and the Warthogs engine. Glory gave a short nod and crouched in the back of the flatbed, Incineration Cannon in hand. The four orange explosive particle streams detonated against one of the leading vehicles causing it to explode, the four explosive streams went off in four separate directions and caused two more vehicles to explode. The enemy vehicles slowed down enough for Echo to make their escape and pick up Felix and Vakarian, the latter of which also complained about the lack of comfort.

* * *

><p>UNSC Colony World Shanxi, Shanxi-Theta System, September 28, 2586

Philip's frown deepened after he was blown off by Admiral Lasky for his 'bad feeling', Philip wasn't sure why but he knew something was wrong. "Lorelie, did the Batarians manage to send out any

communication signal, distress beacons, anything?" he asked the A.I from his command seat.

"Yes, one emergency signal was sent out by the leading Batarian Crui-'Dreadnought'" she corrected herself, using the Council definitions of a ship, "It's destination however I cannot fathom a guess," she said, Philip sighed and rested his head low on one hand. He suddenly got an idea, "Lorelie we abandoned this are of space right? Are there any old Navy stations near here, dry docks, ship breaking yards, anything?" he asked,

"Checkingâ€¦ oh my, yes, the colony of Roost had a dry dock for ships in this sector; it was abandoned in 2534. Commander you don't thinkâ€¦" she trailed off, "I do, were there any ships left there?" he asked,

"According to the logs I have access to; yes. Four _Gorgon_-class Destroyers and a single _Halcyon_-class light Cruiser, they were stripped of their Slip-space drives and ammo, other than that they were just left there to rot," she replied, her avatar looked at him from her pedestal,

"Where exactly is Roost?" he asked, although truth be told he really didn't want to know the answer, the look Lorelie's avatar gave him was the only answer he needed.

"Lieutenant Vickers contact Admiral Lasky and tell him we may have Batarian reinforcements inbound, Lorelie send over all available information," he ordered and watched as his bridge crew prepare for a battle he was sure was coming.

* * *

><p>AN; hope you enjoyed. now Review!**

11. Chapter 11

AN; Hope you Enjoy!

* * *

><p>UNSC Colony World Shanxi, Shanxi-Theta System, September 28, 2587

The trip back to UNSC lines was thankfully uneventful, after hours of fighting and moving the last thing Echo team needed was another fire fight or problem to crop up. When they arrived back at the village the sun was setting, casting a purple hue on the skyline. Marines had set up shop; machine guns were set up along with mortars and defensive barriers. A company of Marines from the 4th Rifle Battalion, a mechanised infantry unit, was setting up a motor pool for their vehicles.

David had the teams pull the old Warthogs in there, no point leaving them out in the open. As he turned the 'Hog into a free spot he saw one of the new Bulldog fighting vehicles, a bigger, heavier and better armoured version of the Warthog, it was also just as fast. It sported a 30mm cannon and a Spartan Laser mount, all controlled by the weapons station on the inside via several high-res camera's and

computers. It could transport four soldiers and all their gear, one of the few disadvantages is that it is more susceptible to enemy air support.

Becky let out whistle of appreciation at the impressive truck; a Marine 1st Lieutenant nearby had a nasty looking frown on his face as he approached the dismounting ODST and Turian team. "You Echo team?" the Lieutenant asked, "Sure is, what can we do for you Lieutenant?" David replied as he came round the front of the Warthog, the Marine looked at Victus distastefully and replied,

"Well I would prefer it if you just fucked off in those old junk heaps you just brought in, but someone up top has ordered us to lend you two of our Bulldogs, next thing you know their gonna ask us to surrender our Challengers to the fucking Grunts." The Marine grumbled out in a thick Irish brogue, he was obviously not happy with the arrangements but orders were orders.

"Wait, Bulldogs only carry four people and there's nine of us," David said with a slight frown, the Marine just looked at him, "yeah apparently the Forerunner is staying with us, the bosses way of making things even,"

That was just great, he was losing one of his men as a trade off because someone else said he should, sometimes David really hated the chain of command. "Where can we get some rest, we've been shooting shit all day so we would really appreciate somewhere where we could get some sleep," David asked and the Lieutenant looked like he was about to explode, "Great first you want our trucks now you want our fuckin' beds, ugh fine we set up some cots in the church, but the second Shanxi-Theta pops up over the Horizon I want you to get the fuck out of here," the Lieutenant spat out with as much venom in his voice as possible.

The group left the motor pool and headed to the church where they would rest before setting out again in the morning, sure they could have carried on going and would have done had events played out differently, but they had the opportunity to get some sleep and all of them knew not to waste a chance like that.

At the first hint of daylight Echo team was driving away in their new IFVs, the larger seats were more comfortable for the bulky Turians and the ODSTs felt like children at Christmas, after all they were in a brand new vehicle that had only just entered service. David took his Bulldog upfront and took the team down the long road to Yamatai, the Capital. The large IFVs were surprisingly quick and they moved along the dirt road and into an urban area just outside the city before midday.

They reached a UNSC checkpoint that had been set up near what was once a school, gates and barriers had been quickly erected and a Company's worth of troops were milling about, all had their weapons and armour on and were ready for anything.

Once inside the checkpoint they quickly dismounted and made their way towards an ODST at the centre of camp, her Captain bars stood proudly on her chest plate as their HUDs identified her as Captain Alexandra Dixon, commander of Echo Company, she was the daughter of some war hero, although everyone who survived The Great War was considered a war hero.

* * *

><p>In Orbit of UNSC Colony World Shanxi, Shanxi-Theta System, September 28, 2587

The bridge was deathly silent; the only noise was the hiss of the life support systems or tapping as the crewmen worked at their stations. Philip was deep in thought; if these Batarians had indeed gotten their hands on an old Halcyon-class and added a Mass Effect core to itâ€œ he didn't dare think about the implications, the main gun would then be able to tear through nearly everything in the fleet, barring the Infinity and some of the Forerunner ships.

"Lorelie, Mass Effect based ships use FTL in real space right?" Philip asked, breaking the silence, "According to the data the Council species sent over, yes. Why?" she replied as her avatar formed next to him,

"That would cause a rather noticeable blue shift, correct?" he asked her, she looked at him, "Yes,"

"And the scanners on the Sevenfold would be able to detect this, even from beyond the edge of the system, right?" she sighed dramatically and replied in an annoyed tone, "Yes Commander, now what is the point in all these questionsâ€œ" she asked before realising what he was implying, "you want me to track any form of Blue Shift around the system, just in case right?" he nodded in reply but said nothing.

It was several hours before she picked up something moving towards the system, the Infinity also seemed to pick it up as well as the massive vessel turned about, the rest of the group following it.

"Spool up the Slip-Space drive Lorelie, we might need it." Philip ordered and power started to shift from non-essential systems into the Trans-light drive,

"Sir?" one of the Ensigns asked, but Philip said nothingâ€œhe had nothing to say, no reassuring speeches, no epic battle cry, nothing. He just stared out the viewport and into space.

* * *

><p>Millions of kilometres distant two hundred warships sowed down and exited FTL, the large bulky form of an old Halcyon-class light Cruiser surrounded by four of the more streamlined Gorgon-class Destroyers and then a hundred and ninety six ships of Batarian design surged forth, powerful Mass effect fields being emitted allowed the old UNSC ships to move quickly.<p>

* * *

><p>The bridge of the Infinity hadn't been this hectic since the events of Requiem, the lights dimmed and a red light lit up the bridge as power was shunted into more vital systems.

"All hands to battle stations, I repeat all hands to battle stations,

this is not a drill!" Admiral Lasky said over the ships wide Com. He could see the holographic representations of the joint fleet moving to engage,

"Admiral, that old Halcyon is emitting a large Mass effect field, the min gun on that thing will tear trough anything in the fleet!" Roland said as he appeared on the corner of the table, he sounded worried,

"Shields to maximum and power up all MAC guns!" Lasky barked,

Throughout the fleet ships were preparing to fire their MACs and Energy projectors, but the Batarians fired first, the three hundred ton slug moved at almost relativistic speeds, and it was aimed right at Shanxi, not at the fleet, if it hit the planet millions of people would be killed, Batarian, Human, Turian, Asari, Forerunner and Salarian.

"Move the Infinity to intercept that round!" Lasky ordered and the Infinity moved with an incredible amount of speed, but even than it was too slow, "Admiral, the Sevenfold is preparing to jump, I don'tâ€!" Roland trailed off as the Sevenfold disappeared and reappeared in the way of the MAC round and fired all of her Archer missiles, just before the slug smashed through the Destroyer the Archers detonated, the MAC round shifted ever so slightly, but it was enough, it still broke through the upper decks of the Sevenfold and carried on, the slight change in its course was enough however, it would miss the planet, if barely.

Lasky watched as the Sevenfold tumbled uncontrollably, it was pushed into a low orbit and it carried on going, the damaged hull started to tear itself apart as it entered the upper atmosphere, the chances of any of the crew surviving would be low, and Lasky knew this.

"ALL SHIPS OPEN FIRE!" he ordered and hundreds of MAC rounds, Archer missiles and energy beams fired, the Batarians had tried to earn a cheap shot, only for it to fail.

* * *

><p>Time seemed to slow to a crawl as the Sevenfold exited from Slip-space, everything seemed to happen so slowly, the Archer missiles fired and detonated, the sheer explosive force behind all the warheads shifted the MAC slug just enough to miss the planet, but not the Sevenfold.

Philip and the bridge crew saw the slug shoot past the golden shield and tear through the upper decks, including the number one MAC gun, the ship shook violently as the kinetic force caused the Destroyer to tumble, the weakened superstructure groaned as it tried to hold together. The round had forced the Sevenfold into Shanxi's gravity well, the reactors were offline which meant the crew could do nothing as it started to burn up in the upper most reaches of the atmosphere.

"All hand abandon ship, I repeat abandon ship!" Philip ordered throughout the crumbling Destroyer, as his bridge crew made their way out one of his Lieutenants stopped at the bulkhead,

"Commander?" he called, Philip turned to face him for a brief second before continuing what he was doing, "I'll be right behind you Lieutenant, just need to secure Lorelie for travel is all, let her see the sights," the Lieutenant headed towards the command escape pod while Philip pulled Lorelie out of the ships systems and heading towards the escape pods himself, Lorelie's chip tucked away securely in his uniform pocket.

* * *

><p>"So Captain, what's our new mission? Ya know 'cause last time I checked we were meant to be holding the little village few mile down yonder," David said, pointing in the general direction they had just come from,<p>

"Plans change Shepard, you know this," the Captain replied, "Right, the Council races are attacking the northern side of the city while Marine forces are attacking the east side, Spartans are wiping out anyone in the south and Forerunners are doing the same on the western front. Echo Company is to move into the city and wipe out jammers the fuckers have set up on the northern and eastern sides." Captain Dixon stopped for a moment before continuing,

"You'll be riding with some armour on this one Echo, Challengers and Warriors will support you as you move through the eastern front, reports show fierce fighting in that area, they're using human slaves as meat shields and cannon fodder." Dixon said, Becky was almost bouncing with excitement, she loved the Challenger tank, the massive tank would roll over just about anything and what it couldn't roll over it would destroy.

David however could help but frown, these aliens, these monsters were using slaves against their attackers, and how were they meant to liberate these people if they were forced to shoot them.

"ROE sir?" he asked, referring on how to deal with any slaves that might be sent his way. Captain Dixon sighed slightly before replying,

"Incapacitate but do not kill any of them if you can help it," she replied, as the Captain and Lieutenant carried out their planning an explosion caused the entire Company to go to alert, up above them they saw the yellow streak of the MAC round bouncing off the atmosphere, shortly followed by the burning wreck of the Sevenfold. It would crash hundreds of kilometres away, way outside their theatre of operations.

* * *

><p>The Librarian had seen many things in her many millennia of life, she had seen the rise and fall of the ancient Human empire, she saw the ten thousand ships left by ancient Forerunner Warriors in another galaxy, and their descendants, she saw the fall of the Forerunners and then the rise of the Reclaimers, well she was still witnessing that last part. This generally meant that she was wise, knowledgeable and had extreme amounts of patients, that is why she was currently heading towards the ONI building, as she walked through the perimeter she saw the statue that had been erected, it was of one of the Humans 'Spartan' warriors, people of vast skill and power that their enemies

often thought of them as demons.<p>

Apparently this one, this Spartan, had sacrificed itself to stop the Covenant from accessing the Shield World; he had even destroyed the outer layers to do so.

Inside the building were desks and lots of guards and security, however dominating the wall opposite the entrance was a large slab of Onyx rock, in its dark surface was the names of the people who had died to stop the Covenant or that were killed by the sentinels that used to protect the shield world. She was quickly waved through however, as she was needed by the man who ran the base.

The man I charge went by the name of Admiral Sullivan; he was also a good friend with Admiral Lasky from what she had heard. He was also very involved with the work that went on here, he studied everything along with the scientists.

The Admiral however was sat at his desk reading through what looked like dozens of reports, he looked both board and interested at the same time. He looked up as she entered the room, it was dominated by the large wooden desk at which the Admiral sat at, and he smiled at her and rose to his feet,

"Librarian, thank you for coming, we have something to discuss," he said, the humans hadn't changed all that much over time, a few skin variations and that was about it, they were just as robust, if not more so than their ancestors. The Admiral had short grey hair, and wore a uniform that made the ones his ancestors wore look plain, the dark greys and blacks were dotted with golden bars and linings and four silver stars that dominated his shoulders.

"Of course, what is it you wished to talk about, Admiral?" the Librarian seemed to hesitate at the title but it was brief, so brief that a less observant man would have missed it,

"We've just gotten word back from the force at Shanxi, you know the one that went there to wipe out the alien slavers," he made gestures with his hands as he spoke, "well apparently the fleet sent there happened to come across another alien civilisation calling itself the 'Citadel Council', a conglomerate of aliens that work together for the betterment of all life in the galaxy, or so they say," he paused to take a breath, "the reason I asked for you here is fairly simple; we want you to head the negotiations with these people, after all our track record with aliens hasn't gone really well so far and certain members of Fleetcom, myself included fear it won't be too long before the uneasy truce between us and them breaks down and a whole new war starts, which we don't want, at all. Ever."

The Librarian was only slightly shocked; she figured she would lead any form of diplomatic mission simply because of her many years of experience in dealing with other races. "I would be honoured Admiral Sullivan, I must ask however, who else will be joining us?" she asked, referring to the other races already encountered,

"A Sangheili Ship Master, an Unggoy Tribal chief, an ambassador from the UEG and an Admiral or General from the UNSC, maybe one of the younger races will want to join in on the talks, even if it's just to see what the grown-ups do," he replied, she nodded her understanding, although the way modern Humans seemed to talk with metaphors always

confused her, but who was she to second guess the manner in which a species talks and expresses itself.

"You'll be on board the Dauntless for this mission, a brand new line of Battle Cruiser; it's still experimental so it's the only one we have. It'll be under your command during the talks, after that though, I want it back." The human continued,

"Of course Michael, however I would like to bring a few personal aides with me, they would greatly benefit from being allowed to interact with the alien cultures,"

"I wouldn't have thought of anything else Librarian, but the Dauntless won't be going anywhere until Shanxi is a free UNSC colony once again,"

Admiral Sullivan and the Librarian spent a great many hours talking about what would be negotiated, mainly territory, resources and other such things.

* * *

><p>Hope you enjoyed, now go and leave a review!

12. Chapter 12

A/N; I noticed a lot of complaints about the MAC round and the **Sevenfold. So here I am explaining it for you, after all you did ask nicely.**

A MAC round fires a 600ton slug at 30,000MS**-1****(meters per second), now that's a lot of power (64 kilotons of kinetic energy. Now a Mass Effect Core (which also powers the weapons) would reduce the mass (say by half) and fire it at higher velocities (say four times the speed) so, there you go, go do the math and ask the question again. (Obviously it's all basic speculation and not fact, but use it as a base line and away you go.) **

Now Trife this one is for you; I would never, **ever do such a thing. Why on earth would I weaken the UNSC so much? Seriously I think the UNSC would never join the Citadel Council, not before the Great War nor after it. So rest assured friend, such injustice will not be committed in my story.**

6tailedninja- Now, I appreciate being corrected only as long as the person correcting me is actually correct. A Lieutenant serves as the Officers on the bridge, not Ensigns (yes the guy from The fall of Reach was an exception) this is proven several times throughout the books, I would suggest reading them.

Guest-If it's so hard to follow why are you reading it this far?

**Now onto other matters I do something that hasn't been done in other FFs like this, (at least to my knowledge) so read it, enjoy it and then review. I mean it REVIEW! Only 19 reviews for the last chapter, so be nice and comment on the story, (or tell me how horrible it is so I can ignore you, or listen to you depending on

what you say). **

Any way enjoy the chapter and remember I do not own either franchise, only characters, Ship classes and planets I invented. **

>

* * *

><p>UNSC Colony world Shanxi, Yamatai East End, 1321 hours, September 29, 2587

"_Be advisedâ€"all stations Echo; you have enemy air and armour heading your way, ETA one minute." _ The voice of an officer inside the TOC on board the SkyFall reported, interrupting the sound of the rain hitting the windows and the powerful engine of the Bulldogâ€"it gave Echo Company a brief warning before Batarian forces hammered their position. David looked over to Becky who was at the weapons station next to him.

"You hear that Becks? Get your game face on!" just as he turned to face the road again he saw the leading elements of Batarian forces open fireâ€"a gunship fired a rocket at the leading units of Echo Company; which was him.

"INCOMING!" David yelled in warning, not just to his team that was also in the Bulldog but over the , giving the rest of Echo Company time to react. Bulldogs swerved off the main road and onto the sidewalks while Warrior IFVs activated their shields and anti-missile systems. Rockets from shoulder fired launchers or SAM systems on the Warriors fired causing smoke to spread throughout the Company, reducing their visibility drastically. Laser fire and 30mm cannon rounds were also unleashed at the oncoming battalion of Batarian Troops.

Time slowed down for David and those inside the first Bulldog; the rocket impacted the road right in front of the right wheel of the Bulldog, lifting the FAV into the air and depositing it roughly on its side where it slide to a halt after crashing into a pile of rubble that once formed part of the Yamatai Plaza. Inside the Bulldog David was pinned to his seatâ€"a large metal pole, part of the plumbing in the Plaza, was sticking through the windscreen and had managed to lodge itself in his thigh, the awkward angle made it impossible to for him to move. Looking towards Becky he saw her limp figure leaning against the restraints, blood dripped from her dark hair and cut up faceâ€"her Bio signs were displayed on his shattered HUD, from what he could see, she was alive but unconscious.

He ripped of his damaged helmet and threw it towards his feet; his HUD flickered wildly as his neural implant stopped projecting it to his helmet and shifted it directly to his iris. Echo Company was putting out a lot of hurt by the sounds that raged around the crashed FAV. A groan from the back alerted him to the two turians in the back.

"Vakarian, that you?" David said through gritted teeth. Another groan answered him before Vakarian found his voice again.

"Yes Lieutenant, found a great place for a nap by the way." The turian managed to get out, the crash wasn't any better for them

either at least.

"Good, maybe later we'll use but for now I need you to get your friend and Becky out of here, get them safe and then get your scaly ass back here, got that?" David ordered.

"Got it," David heard the snap as the turian cut through the harness and freed himself, David strained to look back and saw Vakarian open the door and lift the other turian out of it, his injuries hampered his progress but he did it. A few minutes later the door next to Becky opened and allowed David to briefly see tracer rounds from both sides fly past along with a missile that struck a nearby skyscraperâ€"raining debris on the battle field. Vakarian stuck his head in and started to grab at Becky when he saw the pipe through David's thigh.

"Lieutenant?" he questioned.

"Get Becky out of here, GO!" David yelled but the turian still didn't move. David tapped a red blinking display, "Fuel cells are ruptured, it's gonna blow any damn second!" David thanked the Lord when the Turian hastened to get Becky out of her seat; she was slowly regaining consciousness but was still groggy and no help.

Vakarian pulled the Sargent out of the wreckage and started to pull her to safety, gunfire zipped past constantly, some rounds coming far too close for comfort. He pulled her to where the rest of the team were holding position. Eugene, the massive human known as Train turned to face him.

"Hey Blue, where the fuck is the LT!" he roared over the gunfire while running over to help,

"He's pinned to his seat, you'd need a damn cutting laser to get him out of there." Vakarian handed Becky off to Train and made a mad rush to get back to the Bulldog despite the shouts from Train and Lieutenant Victus. Running through open ground in the middle of a crossfire was not something he ever wanted to do again as he dodged enemy fire and stray shots from friendly units.

He climbed back on top of the wrecked vehicle and jumped in next to David, he activated his Omni-tool to try and use the built in cutter to get through the metal before the fuel cells detonated. David shook his head at the younger Turian.

"For the wolf to survive he has to chew off his own leg, your fancy wrist thing isn't going to cut it. Use your knife, cut off the legâ€"my bones are shattered Vakarian, nothing but skin and muscle holding me here."

Vakarian took his knife out but hesitated, unsure of what to do, his hands started to shake slightly as more crimson blood seeped out of the Lieutenant's armour and onto his own.

"Come on Vakarian! If you don't have the balls than get the fuck out of here!" David all but yelled in pain and anxiousness. Vakarian made his decision he plunged the knife down and started cutting the Officers leg, the shattered armour offering no resistance. David screamed before passing out from the pain.

"Ah crap, come on you stupid Pyjak, don't die on me now," Vakarian grumbled as he finished cutting off the leg, he looked over to the red display and saw it blinking rapidly. Double timing it he hoisted the human up and out the door and onto the road where tanks were parked behind whatever cover they could find and still fire their main guns from.

Rain pelted down almost as hard as Batarian fire, the cold rain just added to the sceneâ€”a dozen IFVs were nothing but burnt out husks and another dozen were using their dead companions hollow shells as cover, gunfire from UNSC and Batarian weapons filled the air, nothing else. He spotted Train and Victus moving towards him, a shell from a Batarian tank landed twenty meters away sending they synthetic road material into the airâ€”along with two unlucky ODSTs who flew in multiple directions. Train grabbed David by his other arm and helped rush him to cover while Victus followed and provided covering fire. Just as they started moving again the Bulldog's fuel cells detonated and destroyed the vehicle.

A Challenger tank from the back of the column came crashing through everything in the street as it lined up its main gun on its batarian equivalentâ€”the massive 120mm cannon fired, the shockwave caused dirt and small debris nearby to move violently, the cannon firing deafened Vakarian for a brief second. The batarian tankâ€”an older model of Turian tanks, tried to use its superior manoeuvrability to dodge the shell but it was fruitless. The round struck it in its left engineâ€”causing the left side of the tank to explode, it crashed to the ground before its ammo bank exploded, destroying it completely.

The team was taking cover behind hastily piled sandbags, courtesy of the people currently shooting at them. Becky was moving again while the only one of the other turians was present other than Victus, Felix was nowhere to be seen either.

"Who's in charge now Sarge?" Train asked as he put David down and started to stop the bleeding. Becky ran a hand over her face before replying.

"I don't know!" she yelled over the gunfire, her eyes moving rapidly in slight motions from side to side. "Iâ€”I am, I'm the most senior officer, everyone elseâ€”they'reâ€”they're dead." She stammered out, her hands started shaking slightly before she caught them.

"Get everyone to fall back, we'll find another way round!" she ordered, she looked over to Victus, "Grab Shepard, we're not leaving him here," she told him. She picked up her rifle and checked it, steeling herself for what was to come.

"All units Echo, fall back immediately, find an alternate route to the Jammer," she ordered over the , the fire teams that made up Echo Companyâ€”or what was left fell back, covering each other all the way. She led Echo 1-1, Shepard's squad, through a ruined restaurant and into a back ally where Felix joined them after a minuet, his armour full of scratches and dents.

"Where's Vyrnnus?" Vitus asked the human sniper, who shook his head.

"Gone, dead, I don't know. One second he was there, the next he was

gone." Felix replied, as he came to a stop next to Becky and David who was still out of it. "Fuck what happened to the El-Tee?"

"We crashed; it was the only way to get him out of there before it exploded." Vakarian said in explanation.

"We can't keep him with us; he'll just slow us down." Victus said, only to be rebutted by the three humans.

"Hell no!"

"Fuck that bro!" Train and Felix yelled out while Becky walked up to him and prodded him on his chest to accentuate her words.

"No. Man. Left. Behind. We are not leaving him here, you don't like that? Then you can shove it up your ass Victus. He wouldn't leave any of us, we're NOT leaving him. Clear?" she growled out menacingly. He stuttered slightly, shocked at her refusal to leave the wounded man behind, before he nodded.

"Becksâ€| he's right, I'm just gonna slow you downâ€| get you all killed." David mumbledâ€" his hands were shaking as he tried to get slightly more comfortable.

"No, no, no! I am not leaving you, remember Luyten? You didn't leave me, I am not leaving you here!" she almost screamed at him.

"That was different Becks! We didn't have enemy armour and air along with half a fucking battalion on our ass. Plus you could still walk!" David repliedâ€" his face contorted as his movements caused pain to shoot through his body.

"The same principle applies!" David grabbed her shoulder and pulled her close.

"If I left you there, your life would have been wasted. If you leave me here, my life will be spent. There's a difference Becks, no get out of here. When the counter attack hits the four eyed buggers are gonna come tearing through here just like you. I'll keep them occupied." David grabbed his tags and ripped them off; he placed them in Becky's hand as he said his last words to a friendly face.

"Tellâ€| Meredithâ€| tell her I'm sorry, I'm so sorry." He whispered to her before pushing her away, before anyone could say anything radio chatter followed by the sound of Broadswords flying overhead stopped them, explosions followed seconds later as the majority of the enemy in the street was torn apart, the survivors mad moves towards the buildings on the side of the road.

Becky cast one last look at David before she led the team out of the ally and towards the last remaining jammer. They had spent the entire morning taking out jammers and were moving to the last one when they were intercepted by Batarian forces. She heard David's gun fire several times before it was drowned out by the sound of more weapons fire from batarian guns. She would shed a tear for her friend later but right now she had a mission.

"We'll make these bastards pay, for David, for Vyrnnus, for everyone who has been hurt by these ass holes," Becky said to the group, her

back turned to them.

"Hoo-rah!" Train and Felix said from their spots, the three remaining turians looked to one another and nodded before they let out their own cry for victory.

Becky led them through buildings and side streets until they came within a hundred meters of the apartment building where the jammer had been set up. Between them and it was a platoon's worth of enemy troops and a lot of open ground.

"It doesn't look like the rest of the Company made it." Felix commented, looking through his scope at the enemy emplacements.

"They made it, and we'll all have to make that push if we want to get through to the jammer." Becky replied, her eyes scanning the street for any sign of anyone from Echo Company. There! She spotted several IFF tags in the building across the street—the Yamatai museum.

* * *

><p>UNSC Protectorate world New Babylon (Zion), Deliverance System, September 29 2587

The Capital city of Zion was as beautiful as it was deadly; the inhabitants of the planet had always built their cities like the old English castles—only these ones were made out of much stronger material and had much better defences. Towering skyscrapers glistened in the early morning sunlight as the dual suns rose up above the horizon.

The Tal'Sae were a race of tribal creatures that brought their ancient traditions in tribes into their modern society, they believed in things similar to ancient American Indians but only more—alien. Each city state was ruled by an Alpha pair while Enforcers acted as both the security and the Army for each city state, hunters were in charge of food gathering in older times but now they acted as scouts and envoys to other city states. Females were still predominantly seen as secondary citizens compared to males of the same 'rate', the majority of them looked after the younglings and organised the households and economy.

Fal'Cai knew all about the inner workings of Tal'Sae culture, it was his duty as the current Alpha male of the most powerful city state on Zion. He had asserted himself as the Alpha male less than a week before a large UNSC fleet arrived in system, the people of Zion had feared an invasion from the fleet but only the smallest vessel in the fleet came near Zion and initiated contact, the rest stayed by the edge of the system. That had been nearly ten years ago on the Tal'Sae calendar.

Fal looked up out of his office window to see the large towering tether that linked to a station in orbit, the Tal'Sae had many marvellous inventions; their skyscrapers, their first interplanetary colony on the closest moon, holographic interfaces, metal alloys for armour and construction. All of it was rendered old fashioned by the UNSC and UEG who had mastered such creations centuries before. He didn't resent the humans, his shaman had spoken to the ancestors and

they guided him past resentment. No he idolised them, they were true Alpha males and females. They ruled their lands and seas with a loose enough hold that the people didn't rebelâ€"too much, but strong enough to stop it all falling apart.

His city state, Tol'Daemâ€"named after an ancient king that once ruled over the lands it was built on, was one of only a few states to house a tether network, but his had something the others didn'tâ€"the embassy. A large building that was constructed nearby held the UEG and UNSC flags at only 'half-mast' as it was called, they only did this when very high ranking officials in either their government or military died or on certain days in their calendar, and having spent enough time with the humans over the years he knew it was not one of those days.

In fact he was willing to bet that this was the reason he was meeting with the UEG ambassador in just a few minutes. His office was lavishly decorated; the silver, blue and gold colours lit up the room and gave it a very expensive look and to him advanced and dominating look. He had heard humans refer to it as more of an art display than an office, he had been offended at first but he quickly learnt that it was merely the difference in cultures and that he wasn't really all that impressive to the humansâ€"they didn't fear him like or respect him the same way his people did.

The large doors opened and revealed the human ambassador and his entourageâ€"four guards from the Army detachment who were part of a well-known unit of close quarter combat specialists, the large knives were easily visible and reminded him of who the real power belong too in this room. That was one thing that confused him about humans; they could easily dominate the entire Tal'Sae race, they were obviously more powerful and much more advanced but yet they treated the Tal'Sae as equals, not subordinates. This was of course seen as a weakness at first by many city states but the massive forms of the UNSC Super Carriers was enough to persuade them otherwise.

"Ambassador I am honoured by your presence, I trust your journey was pleasant and unhindered." Fal greeted the human with a traditional greeting and bow. One used when a lower standing city is visited by an envoy of a higher standing city.

"Of course Fal'Cai, however I am here to inform you that we just received word from Earth; Lord Hood passed away last night. You and your wife and any subordinates you wish to bring are invited to the funeral. But that is not the only reason I am here today, I'm also here to offer you a chance to get your people more involved in the politics of the galaxy." Ambassador Erwin Chance replied, he gave a customary bow in return but he quickly rushed past pleasantries, and for good reason.

"I am saddened by Lord Hood's passing, may his ancestors guide him in the afterlife. Of course we shall attend, Lord Hood did my people a great many favours, and it would be shameful of me not to honour him in his passing." Fal offered his condolences for the loss of the human Lord, a man whose ancestry allowed him to connect with the Tal'Sae culture slightly better than others. Fal offered the ambassador a seat which he took.

"What exactly is your offer Ambassador?"

"A UNSC fleet came in contact with an alien conglomerate, the UEG are sending political envoys from all associated races that want to take part, Forerunners, Sangheili and obviously humans will be goingâ€" the offer is for you to join the envoy and potentially find new allies and recourses to expand your peoples fledgling interstellar empire." Chance replied, laying all the cards on the table so to speak. One of the best ways to get the Tal'Sae to respond was to be open, honest and never hold anything back.

Fal thought about it momentarilyâ€"the potential was huge, massive even, but at the same time it exposed the Tal'Sae to other races that were centuries ahead of them technologically. Who knew what would happen, the UEG had been adamant about sharing technology, refusing to yield anything but the most basic of modern sciences and FTL travel was heavily regulated by the UNSC fleet. Humans weren't interfering with his people's natural progression, not enough to 'damage' his people. But these new aliens, they might just try that and he would upset not only his ancestors but everyone's ancestors if he allowed that to happen. He shivered slightly at the thought of all the ancestors clawing his soul apart after he passed on.

"I would have to confer with other leading city states before I can reach an answer ambassador."

"Of course Fal'Cai, this effects your entire civilisation after all. If you should decide to join the envoy send word to me and I will inform them for you. However the quicker the decision the better." Chance said, "Also the Corvette _Road Runner_ will be here to pick you up at the end of the week to take you to Earth for Lord Hood's funeral." With that Ambassador Chance took his leave back to the embassy building.

Fal turned back towards the window and looked up at the sky, when he was a pup he used to look up at the night sky and wonder what laid beyond, what amazing things laid beyond his people's home system. When they met the humans he thought he would know the answers to the questions he would ask as a child, but now he wasn't so sure. There was so much the humans weren't telling him about the galaxy, about their history, about the Forerunners.

* * *

><p>UNSC Colony world Shanxi, Yamatai East End, 1452 hours, September 29, 2587

Echo 1-1 made it to the museum without being spotted; they rushed through into the lobby to see Echo 1-4 and Echo 2-3, Granite and Onyx squads. Sargent Nick Medhurst stepped forth and greeted them.

"Sargent Coulson, glad to see you alive, I didn't particularly feel like leading the charge, I leave all that heroic crap to other people." He said in a surprisingly posh accent, one that didn't suit a soldier.

"Uh-huh, nice to know. Is this all that made it?" she replied, Medhurst nodded.

"Yep, we also have a Challenger out back; I've got Mac and Rocket keeping an eye on It." he said before a look of horror crossed his

face, "And I am really fucking stupid for letting them look after the tank, be back in a jiffy." He quickly added before sprinting out the room. Becky shot the next highest ranking person in the room a scalding look.

"What was that all aboutâ€| Corporal Mills?" she asked the man who had the decency to look sheepish before replying.

"Last time we left Mac and Rocket in charge of a vehicleâ€| let's just say we had to walk home."

"Please the idiots got the damn Bulldog stuck in a ditch, upside down and on fire." Another Corporal addedâ€"her name came up as Lynda Bird.

"Fine whatever, but we're gonna need that tank and every single one of you to make it to that jammer."

Medhurst came back in the room followed by two other figures who were trying to plead innocent about something; she guessed that these two were Mac and Rocket.

"Listen up people; we're all that's left, other than who's still with the Captain over in the suburbs. We have to take down that jammer. The cocks have a whole fucking platoon guarding it and there's only fifteen of us and a tankâ€"'"

"Don't forget Arthur!" Corporal Bird cried out, only to be met with confused looks, "I mean the AGR," she said quietly, pointing to the small automatic drone that was armed with a small but powerful machine gun and rocket launcher, it sat there next to a reception desk almost like it was trying to hide from these idiots.

"Okay and an AGR, we'll use the tank to wipe out their primary defences and use it for cover. Once inside we'll split up and rendezvous on the top floor, from there we'll breach the roof and throw the damn thing off the roof. Any questions?"

"Aye, why can't we just blow the damn thing up? I'm sweaty enough as it is, my balls areâ€"' Mac started but a Lance Corporal who hadn't yet spoken interrupted the Scot with a shout.

"Now is not the time Mac!"

Becky shook her head at the group, they were dysfunctional and unprofessional but she had to make do with who she had available.

"Good, we go now, Batarians were right behind us so we need to move now or we'll be fighting on two sides."

The fifteen man strong group double checked their weapons and made their way to the Challenger before they started their assault. They prayed to whoever they believed in, desperate to live through the day and tell the story to their children.

* * *

><p>AN; so hope you enjoyed it, don't hate me for what I did, I like being inventive and what not. Also any of my British readers

watch 'Bluestone42'? If so you probably recognise a few characters (which I don't own!) (Wouldn't it be funny to see those guys in ME? Ah the funny would be too much) Also yes I know I used scenes and lines from MW3 (slightly you might recognise it) and BF4 (only a line I swear). **

**Any way leave a review, it only takes a few seconds of your time to say whether or not you liked it. **

13. Chapter 13

So here we go chapter 13, sorry about the long update time, my netbook died and i lost a lot of work, plus a lot of stuff going on in real life and what not is the cause but i still manged to get this out for you.

Don't forget to leave a review at the end.

**I don't own anything, it all belongs to its respectful owners, as in not me. **

* * *

><p>UNSC Colony world Shanxi, Yamatai East End, 1459 hours, September 29, 2587

The Challenger tank was the Scorpion's replacement for a reason, it was bigger, better and more fearsome than the older tank. Its engine growled as it turned the street corner to face the platoon of enemy soldiers. Most of the batarians panicked at the sight, the more battle hardened troops stood their ground and tried to organise the green horns. Heavy weapon units were quickly put into effect by the batarians but not before the Challenger fired off its first shot. The 120mm round exploded mid-air behind enemy cover, the thirteen or so troops hiding behind the wall, hoping not to be seen were turned into sickly orange and yellow confetti.

The heavy machine gun on top let loose as well, the armour piercing rounds tore through most cover and punched through batarians armour with ease, leaving the unfortunate soldiers with fist sized holes in their chests or simply blasted their heads apart. Rocket fire and grenades were the batarians counter attackâ€"several shots made it through the anti-missile system and detonated against the golden shields, weakening them.

Becky took the twelve men left round the enemy flank as they concentrated on the Challenger; she led the way as they got into a position on the left flank.

"Felix, you and Vakarian stay here and provide sniper support. Meet us inside." Becky ordered. Her voice was unnaturally cold, distant. It put Adrien on edge slightly to see her act differently from the woman he'd been getting to know over the course of several weeks.

He kept by her as they moved closer to the enemy position, his rifle at the ready. He had learnt pretty early on that despite the gunpowder used in the majority of human weapons, they were not to be trifled with. The bulky looking weapon she had with her, a MA5D she called it, was capable of some serious damage, even against kinetic

barriers. From their position they had a completely unobstructed line of fire at the enemy.

"Fire on my go." She ordered, mainly for Vakarian and Felix. Adrien lined up his first shot as he waited for the signal, which came in the form of a younger batarian getting ripped apart from the armour piercing ammo of her rifle. He opened fire and watched two batarians hit the floor before they could even react, another was torn in half as the powerful sniper rifle Felix carried fired, and the slight vapour trail formed from the bullets flight path spoke of the power of the weapon.

Using the seconds they bought by the flanking manoeuvre they quickly rushed forward and wiped out the remaining enemy troops. The apartment buildings once lavishly decorated entrance was now littered with the yellow-y blood of the defenders, their corpses were scattered around, the synthetic polycarbonate road and sidewalk were covered in blood and internal organs that had been spilt out, brain matter and skull fragments stained a wall and small fires burnt as munitions set whatever material alight.

"Stay with the tank, watch our backsides." Becky ordered the three inside the tank who manoeuvred it into some cover. "Medhurst take your team up through the southern stairwell, Victus you're with me on the north." She said as Felix and Vakarian re-joined them in the lobby.

"Got it, you heard the lady, get moving!" Medhurst barked at his team, the six of them headed for the stairs on the south side with the AGR following behind them.

Adrien took point as they moved up the stairs, their boots making a steady thud-thud-thud as they moved. The building was only fifteen stories tall, for which he thanked the Spirits, inside the upper floors was little resistance, some women and children who had decided to hide in the apartments along with some slaves who had managed to survive. Bursting through the door to the roof Adrien was forced to fall backâ€"literally to avoid a torrent of gunfire aimed at them, thankfully for him Becky was only two steps beneath him and caught him.

"Granite where are you?" Becky shouted over the Com, the Sergeant with a strange accent was quick to respond.

"_Bit busy here, you're on your own for the moment, I found a bomb inside the fucking building, disarming it nowâ€" I think." _

"You think? YOU THINK? What do mean you think?"

"_I mean I have absolutely no idea what I'm doing, it is an alien bomb after all. But they don't call me 'Ten bombs Nick' for no reason you know." _

"Don't do anything stupid Medhurst, I'll send one of the Turians round, he'll know what he's doing." She barked at the other Sergeant before turning to the other Turian. "You, go over there and help them out, with that bomb and try to figure out why they planted it there in the first place."

The Turian nodded and moved back down to go round and help with the

bomb. Adrien watched him go before turning back to the door, batarian fire had ceased, probably to cool down from overheating them. Becky took the brief pause in enemy fire to lob flash bang grenade, they moved out from the door and into cover on the roof when the batarians were disorientated from the powerful flash of light and sound wave, he threw a grenade at two batarians behind a ventilation unit, the resulting detonation caused them to fly in multiple directions and cover their friends in blood and bone fragments.

The roof was split into two sections; the lower section and upper section, they were separated by a metal set of steps and half a dozen feet. There must have been six or seven batarians on the lower half with twice that number providing support from the top. Adrien leaned out from behind a ventilation unit and let out a burst from his assault rifle and shredded the torso of an unlucky batarian before he shifted his aim to take out one of the batarians on the upper half of the roof.

"Move forward, come on!" Becky yelled over the gunfire, she stood and took out two batarians from two short bursts from her rifle, mass effect rounds bounced and scratched her armour, some even caused visible dents and caused her to stagger slightly. The ODSTs didn't hesitate and joined her, taking out the witless conscripts with an unfortunate amount of ease. Adrien and Vakarian also stood, their shields flared as rounds struck them, it didn't take too long after that for the joint human-turian team to remove the remaining resistance, and reach the jammer.

Becky placed the C-12 on the jammer and was moving back into a safe distance when Felix called out to her.

"Hey Sarge! Got a live one here."

Becky stopped and looked over and sure enough one of them was still alive, trying to claw its way out of Felix's boot. She walked over and kicked it before Felix could even move his foot, she leant down and grabbed it and held it up.

"I am going to fucking kill you, got that? Now lucky for you I'm on a time limit soâ€"adios." She finished the sentence by throwing him over the edge of the roof, his screams quickly stopped with a sickening splat and crunch of bones as he hit the sidewalk below.

Hitting the detonator on the C-12 she watched the jammer list and then collapse over the side of the building, the coms were quickly filled with a mass of voices, some asking for air strikes, others asking for an EVAC.

"Command, this is Sergeant Coulson, all jammers are disabled, I repeat all jammers are down." She reported over the coms.

"_Copy that Sergeant, good job, where's Lieutenant Shepard?" _the Captains voice answered.

"Dead Captain, he didn't make it." Becky replied, she sat down by ventilation unit the rest of them joined her as they sat down together in the rain.

"_Shit, understood Sergeant, I've got a bird on its way to pick you

up." _Dixon informed them; just as she finished Granite team came onto the roof and joined the sitting members of Echo 1-1. They sat in silence while they waited; it took not five minutes for the pelican to show up and take them back to friendly lines. As they flew over the city they saw armoured columns push through enemy lines, a large plume of smoke rose up from the south.

"What happened over there?" Becky asked the pilot.

"Four eyed fuck bags dropped a building on the Spartans to try and stop them advancing."

"Did it work?" Becky asked.

"What do you think?" the pilot replied with his own question.

Becky let out a snort and shook her head; the batarians really didn't know what they were up against.

* * *

><p>Yamatai Industrial District, Shanxi Tether Complex, Tether loading Bay 0-3,

"Two, use the Jackhammer to take out the sentries. Three, Four flank round and hit them from the side. Five you're with me." The lead figure questioned, a green acknowledgment light flickered on his HUD to answer him.

He held up three fingers to the other four hulking soldiers behind the ten foot wall at the very edge of the loading compound for the space tether. Just behind the wall stood two sentries and nearly twenty Batarian SpecFors, whatever they were doing here didn't matter, Fire team Zuma was here to put a stop to it, capture the tether and to take it up to the Crown in orbit and to take control of the station.

As he folded a finger away to indicate two seconds until they moved, another finger went down a second later. Upon zero seconds he motioned for Two to move, the rocket launcher wielding Spartan jumped on top of the wall and fired, the two automated sentry guns exploded in two glorious fire balls. Three and Four rushed round the side to catch the aliens from behind as Two jumped off the wall and One and Five jumped up.

The SpecFors moved into cover as quickly as possible but the Hard-light weapons and perfect shooting from the two Spartans cut the number down from twenty to fourteen. Jumping down from the wall One and Five landed silently and moved forward, Two joined them seconds later. The small rounds used by the batarians barely caused their shields to flicker as they impacted, the batarians were unable to move or lean out of cover and suppress the three advancing Spartans, the few that did dare had their heads burnt out by the powerful energy based weapons.

"Throwing pulse grenade!" Five shouted, as he threw the Forerunner grenade. Seconds later the grenade detonated, causing the nearby SpecFors to shout in alarm as their weapons, shields and all other forms of technology on their persons started to malfunction before the grenade detonated a second time. With the pulse from the second

detonation the batarians were literally turned into nothing but dust.

Behind cover from the Spartan teams' assault the SpecFors thought they might stand a chance against the super soldiers if they stayed in cover and worked together, this however changed as two more of the soldiers started firing from the batarians exposed rear, fighting on two sides against a superior foe was the cause of the SpecFors defeat at the loading bay for the tether.

Walking over the still smouldering corpse of the batarian Special Forces the Spartan team moved to the elevator, the cart itself was in the loading bay and had sturdy looking boxes packed away inside ready for transportâ€"it appeared the batarians had been in the process of loading the cart before Zuma's arrival.

"_Infinity,_ this is Zuma, we're at loading bay 0-3 and are about to take the wagon up to the _Crown_." Zuma one said into his radio as he and the rest of Zuma moved into the cargo wagon.

"_Understood Zuma, your mission remains the same; take control of the _Crown_ and capture Edan Had'dah alive, he is to face trial for crimes against humanity and the mantle, understood Spartans?"_ said the voice of the officer in the Tactical Operations Centre aboard the _Infinity_.

"Understood sir, we'll get it done." The leader replied before disconnecting the Com. The three other members of Zuma were checking out the crates while the fifth member of the squad took his position at the controls panel. At Zuma one's nod Five activated the controls, sealing the wagon and propelling it up the carbon nano-fiber cables at high speed.

* * *

><p>Up on the Crown Edan Had'dah was trying to salvage an impossible situation; his fleet was nothing more than debris, even the emergency reinforcement fleet he had in place was any match, his armies were being wiped out entire battalions at a time and now he had hostile soldiers using the cargo transports connected to the station as a means to capture him. He was furious, these pathetic little upstarts were nothing but slaves and yet still they managed not only to build a fleet that rivalled his own but they had also brought in those insufferable Council species and some new aliens that were nearly unstoppable according to his Commanders on the ground.

He watched as the cargo wagon carrying the incursion team move closer to the station, thankfully he had prepared for such an eventuality; the crates inside were filled with thermonuclear devices his forces had confiscated from the stupid little upstarts and enough normal explosives to breach the hull on a Dreadnought. The only thing stopping them from being detected was the shielded linings of the crates. He smiled to himself as he typed in the detonation codes for the nuclear devices, if these people wanted him alive then he would make them earn their prize in blood and sweat.

* * *

><p>"Zuma, be advised I'm picking up a signal being transmitted

from the *Crown* to your location." The officers' voice spoke over the Comms again, this time with a hint of urgency in his voice.

"Understood, we'll check it out." The leading member of Zuma responded as his team mates forcibly opened one of the crates, inside was nearly two dozen kilos of plastic explosives surrounding an instantly recognizable Shiva nuke, the display of which was flashing red.

"Open that door Five!" Zuma three shouted. Five moved to the emergency release for the cargo doors.

"Get ready!" Five shouted in warning.

"Just do it!" Zuma one shouted, without a moment's hesitation Five pulled the release, the air tight doors snapped fully open, sucking the air from inside the container and the five Spartans inside into most upper regions of Shanxi's atmosphere. Activating their thruster packs the Spartans headed down towards Shanxi as quickly as possible.

Seconds after Zuma's escape from the container the explosives detonated and for a brief moment a new star existed in the heavens above Shanxi, the blast destroyed the tether, thousands of kilometres of nano-fiber cable whipped about wildly as it was pulled to the surface, debris from the support rings started raining down in the already worn surface.

Inside of Zuma Five's armour the situation was just as chaotic; alarms flashed and wailed in warning while the rest of Zuma disappeared from his HUD, their IFF's winking off one by one until he was alone falling towards the ground, he could vaguely hear the officer aboard the *Infinity* calling out to his team but he was unable to respond, the shockwave had knocked the breath out of him, that combined with the heat from the blast and from the friction caused by his current re-entry left him unable to speak, at most all he could do was scream as he plummeted towards the ground.

* * *

><p>Inside the Forward Operating Base known as F.O.B Guardian, the main base of operations for citadel council coalition forces, General Desolas was busy orchestrating the final blow to the batarian resistance in the coalition sector of the city. When he had heard the human vessel *Sevenfold* had been shot down and crashed in his area of command he had sent teams to look for survivors and if possible to bring back anything of value from the ship.

"General, the last of the survivors are being brought in now, Commander Walters is with them but he doesn't look good sir, without proper medical care from the humans he might not make it." One of his officers said, Desolas looked up from what he had been doing to thank the officer, when he did he hesitated; it was one of his senior medical officers, his lightly coloured armour was stained with dark red blood, with small patches of blue, purple and green from coalition troops.

"Understood, I'll contact the human command now to notify them, I doubt they'll want him to dieâ€"they'll either hang him themselves or

give him a medal and call him a hero, either way they'll want him alive."

"Yes sir," the officer replied before going off to see to the wounded.

"Contact General Strauss and inform him we have the survivors from the crash and that Commander Walters is among them. We need them to send over some medics for the wounded." Desolas ordered to another officer before leaving the command centre and heading towards the medical camp. The cold rain had turned the ground into a horrible muddy mush that squelched every time he took a stepâ€"if there was one thing he hated more than batarians, it was mud, especially the squishy kind that got between the nooks and crannies of his armour.

Entering the tent where the humans were being held he made way straight for the Commander, after all Desolas wouldn't be alive right now if it wasn't for this man. He noted that some of the humans nearby tensed and looked ready to jump him should he try anything, although he had no intentions of doing anything.

"What happened to him?" he asked one of the nearby humans, the young looking male was hesitant to respond but did so at the others prompting.

"The Commander was flung from the life pod when we landedâ€"well crashed really, the flaps failed to deploy in time and I don't know what happened after that, it was hectic, chaotic even, I joined the Navy so I wouldn't be in this situation." The young human replied.

"Desolasâ€|? That you? Ugh should have known I'd get stuck with youâ€| I've got a case of chronic bad luck." The Commander said weakly, he looked nothing like the man that had visited the Indomitable just a few short weeks ago, his grey uniform was cover with blood and mud and was torn in multiple places, his skin was dirty and stained with dried blood from the smaller cuts and grazes that had already started to heal themselves. The Commander had had his left arm cut off just above the elbow, the most alarming thing however, was the presence of the bandages over his face; they covered a good portion of his right side, including his eye.

"You seem to be lucky enough to have survived that Commander." Desolas replied.

"Luck has nothing to do with it." Philip replied from the bed, his voice was weak, far weaker than it had been during their first meeting together.

"Yes well, you're alive, that's good." Desolas said, "Why did you choose to sacrifice not only your ship but your entire crew as well? I mean why you didn't let everyone down on this planet die while you would have been safe?" he asked the Commander quietly. Walter looked at Desolas with a small weak smile before replying.

"My dad once told me that; 'our choices and memories are all we have left in the end.' I wouldn't be able to live with myself knowing that I could have saved over two million people but chose not to just for my own sake. I did it because it was right." The Commander was

whispering by the end, he was losing consciousness. Before he could do anything else a large explosion shook everything, shouting and hurried footfalls was next as everybody on the base either panicked or hurried to do something.

Looking outside he could see why; a brilliant ball of fire lit up the dark storm clouds, it was an incredible sight, both awe-inspiring and nightmare inducing; fire and lightning lashed out from the clouds in what could be described as the wrath of an angry God.

14. Chapter 14

Okay, here we go, chapter 14! I'll be honest I never thought it'd be this well received, I mean don't wrong I still have haters but the majority of you like it well enough so far so...

Anyway, I've been going over my earlier work and I really need sort that rubbish out. At some point in the near future I will be editing everything and re posting it as a new story, but only when I've gone over everything.

**I noticed a fair few of you want the combat over with so I will be incorporating the diplomacy part of it along side the combat, this is because I don't want to rush the Shanxi part too much, it's nearly over now anyway. **

I don't own anything

* * *

><p>Orbit of UNSC Colony World Shanxi, Shanxi-Theta System, UNSC Infinity, September 28, 2587**

Admiral Lasky had seen a great deal of war, from Corbulo to Requiem and to here, Shanxi. He was no stranger to war. Most of the bridge crew of the Infinity had never seen a real battle before today, sure they'd been engaged with a couple of Rebel and Remnant ships but they hadn't seen the battles fought during the war, dozens of ships would go head to head in brutal engagements, each side trying to wipe the other out. Only the UNSC didn't have shields back then, nor did they have the powerful weapons of today. None of them had seen a planet glassed. They didn't know peace either; they didn't know what it was like before the Covenant, before the Insurrection, even he didn't know what life was like back then. He could barely remember, he didn't want to remember. Casualty reports were coming constantly, the number of dead was steadily getting bigger. Of course, if they were fighting the Covenant the casualty rate would have been over double what it was, but that didn't mean the Batarian's weren't playing fair either. They were strapping bombs on slaves and throwing them at allied lines and using stolen nuclear devices against UNSC forces. They'd lost fire-team Zuma to that attack. Lasky clenched his jaw at the thought, good men and women had been killed just to bomb the damned tether. Thankfully the 'war' would be over before the day was out.

"Sir, the UNSC Hopeful has just entered the system and is requesting permission to start picking up the wounded." Roland said from the holo-table in front of him.

"Granted, tell General Strauss to send up the wounded." Lasky replied, he was watching the holographic representation of the Hopeful moved into position near the Infinity. It was surrounded by her usual escort of a dozen Destroyers and two Marathon-II Cruisers.

"Aye, Aye, it seems the illustrious Commander Walters has been located, he's still alive." Roland said.

"You sound disappointed Roland." Lasky said, looking up at the yellow hologram with an unreadable expression on his face.

"Well, after a stunt like that, I don't think..."

"He saved everyone on that planet and gave the fleet time to take out that ship, he also thought of looking for the blue shift of incoming Batarian ships before you did." Lasky replied, cutting the A.I off mid sentence.

"Yes but-" Roland started.

"But nothing Roland. I'll be damned if he's hung for being a hero. Drop it Roland." Lasky finished, the conversation was final.

"Aye Captain. Huh... it appears that General Oraka wants to know what the Hopeful is doing here."

"Tell him." Lasky replied, not his gaze went back to the display of ships and debris that littered the system. He stood up straight, ran his hands over his uniform to remove any creases and moved to the Command elevator at the back of the bridge. "Roland. Get Crimson ready, they're going hunting." he called over his shoulder.

* * *

><p>UNSC Colony World Shanxi, Shanxi-Theta System, Fire Base Epsilon, 1621 hours, September 28, 2587

The low whistling sound woke her up before the shout, seconds later an explosion rocked the ground. Moving as fast as possible Coulson ran out the barracks and moved to the makeshift armoury, thankfully she didn't need to bother with her armour. Sleeping in it had it's benefits. She grabbed her MA5E and moved out, she looked round, more explosions rattled the base. Peoples were shouting over the explosions and gunfire, there! She saw a distinctly alien shape move across the base towards the front.

"Victus!" she called out, the alien slowed and turned to face Coulson, it was Vakarian, his alien rifle held tight in his hands.

"Coulson!" he called back, she ran up to him, dirt and shrapnel bouncing off her armour as more artillery fired down on the base. Together they ran for the outer perimeter; a series of Titanium ceramic plating and sandbags, along with 12 meter tall watchtowers. One of them was nothing but four metal supports, still smouldering from the explosive. Explosions rattled off in the distance as the bases own artillery returned fire. A young marine, no older than 19, straight out of boot camp was wondering in circles, his right arm had been blown off and he was going round trying to find it, not even

realising what had actually happened to him. Becky shook her head, the poor kid would more than likely die before the battle was over. Vakarian nearly stopped at the sight but Becky grabbed him and forced him to keep going, there was nothing either of them could do to help.

The outer perimeter was surrounded by a series of trenches and bunkers made from fast drying instacrete. M247H Heavy Machine Gun's and M736 Light Machine Guns providing cover fire and mowing down any batarian that moved out of cover and got too close. Two large vehicle rolled up the road, they had six large wheels and retained the same blocky shape the rest of their vehicles had. A single turret rested on top of the chassis, Becky and Vakarian jumped in the closest trench as the leading vehicle turned to face them, moments later the ground erupted where they had been stood, the fountain of mud and dirt rained down like thick dirty rain on top of them. The mud matted down Becky's hair, making it cling to her face and ran down into her eye's.

"Train, Felix? Victus? Where are you?" She called into the Comm, for a few moments all she could hear was the beating of her own heart and the static that filled her Comm unit.

"Sarge? It's Felix, I'm in one of the watchtowers overlooking everything, Train's with Victus and Captain Dixon, and the other Turian guy! I'm marking their location now!" Felix's voice crackled over the Comm. A small blue triangle popped up on the HUD being projected onto her iris'. She heard the crack of multiple S5's as she and Vakarian started moving through the trenches, gunfire and artillery fire landing all around them, bodies of those that had died still littered the dug-out's, arms and legs were embedded in the mud walls, a puddle of water three inches deep had collected at the bottom, the rainfall had deposited so much that the run-off's had blocked up- trapping the water inside the trenches. A HMG opened fire on one of the bunkers and almost instantly the titanium flaps snapped closed and than covered in jagged holes as the armour piercing round tore through them.

Becky led the way through the maze of trenches, it was only two dozen meters from the back to the front but they were dug in such a way that made the run nearly twice as long. And nearly cost them their lives as an artillery shell landed ahead of them, the blast threw her backwards and on top of Vakarian, who threw out a multitude of curses the translators didn't pick up. Shrapnel and small pebbles clattered against her armour and cut up her already damaged face.

"I'm really gonna have to get a new helmet." she mumbled to her self as she stood up, offering a hand to Vakarian, who took it.

"Train? Captain Dixon? It's Coulson, I'm on my way!" she called through her Comm, hoping they'd hear her. They had to back track and go around the collapsed section. Not an easy thing to do when there are people running every which way trying to get to their teams and resupply the front lines. After pushing their way through the half a Company they reached the front trench, a step was set up on the outer edge to allow shooters to fire back at their enemy. More M736 LMG's were set up along with a few high-calibre GPMG's, tearing away at the incoming forces.

Captain Dixon and Train were huddled next each other with Adrien next

to them, the other Turian whose name Becky hadn't bothered to remember lay nearby, bleeding out, bio-foam and a sterile field generator worked to keep him alive until they could help him properly.

"Coulson! Where the hell have you been?" Dixon shouted as she saw her approach.

"Running that gauntlet you call trenches, what the hell's happening?" Becky questioned.

"Hegemony are launching a massive counter-strike for the city, but they've got to get through us first! The Intrepid is en route to provide aerial support, ETA is five Mikes. Broadswords are inbound as well, ETA for them is two! Spartans are also en route but we don't know how long." Dixon replied.

"A Frigate? How much trouble we expecting?"

"Enough to overwhelm us in the next five minutes!" Dixon snapped. Her grip tightened on her rifle before she let out a deep sigh, "Look we need to hold the line here, if we don't than nothing short of an orbital bombardment will stop them before they reach the city, once that happens it'll be a massacre. The Challenger's are 'bout to roll on up so keep your head down." The Captain said after calming her nerves a bit. Becky nodded and grabbed the rest of her squad, barring Felix, and moved further down the line, towards a patch of ground where the edge of the forest was only thirteen feet away, and contained some of the heaviest fighting.

* * *

><p>UNSC Protectorate world New Babylon (Zion), Deliverance System, November 11, 2587**

Fal'Cai stood on the observation deck of the UNSC Orbital Installation Eden, high above his peoples Home world. Today a UNSC Corvette would be taking him along with his aides to a station the Ambassador had referred to as Trevelyan and from there they would be moving onto the political talks. The door behind him opened with a near silent swish and his two personal guards came to attention, the clicks and snaps of their armour was almost like music to his ears, he could never get enough of it. Sudden memories from his own time as Enforcer raced through his mind for a brief second before he turned to face the new comer, it was Ambassador Chance.

"Ambassador." Fal greeted with a low bow. The Ambassador returned it.

"Fal'Cai." the Ambassador replied, Chance moved next to Fal by the view port, outside was a beautiful view of space, the darkness dotted with the living stars themselves and the two closest moons to Zion. The running light from multiple ships as they moved between the moons and Zion or off on to the UNSC shipping lane before they vanished into almost magical realm of Slip-Space.

"The UNSC Bite Me will be arriving in-system soon, we go as soon as we're on-board. Once we get to Trevelyan you'll be introduced to the other representatives that'll be present at the talks." Ambassador

Chance informed him.

"I see, thank you Ambassador Chance."

"Fal, we've known each other for years. Please, call me Erwin." the Ambassador said with a slight chuckle.

"It would be my honour, Erwin." Fal replied with a small smile on his face despite the awkward word in his mouth. The last time Fal had left his Home world was to travel to Earth for Lord Hoods funeral, he had thought the installations around Zion were incredible but the orbital stations at Earth had been... unbelievable, and the cities, they were huge! Thousands of kilometres of metal and concrete and glass where tens of millions lived maglev trains, six orbital elevators, each one with a further five or six tethers attached to it, all leading to different orbital stations. It was magnificent.

After half an hour the profile of a UNSC Corvette slunk into view, its gun turrets were powered down and it slowed down to dock with the station. The Ambassador led the way through the station and to the airlock that the Corvette was docked at. Fal'Cai was led to the Officers Club as it was called, a dark room that was dominated by a large wooden table, a bar was set up on one wall which was covered in a rainbow collection of alcoholic drinks. The journey was only going to be a few hours long, as they had to stop by a couple of other worlds as well, either to drop of supplies to a human world or pick up another ambassador, he wasn't sure.

Several hours later the UNSC Corvette Bite Me shuddered slightly as it exited Slip-Space and the Ambassadors were escorted to the airlock where after waiting again for some time, the door opened and they were led through a UNSC Dry-dock, and onto a landing pad near the top of the installation. What he saw caused Fal, his aides and the other ambassadors to stop dead in their tracks. The natural curve of the planet... wasn't. Instead it carried on going, and going and going until it was out of his view. But the circular curve was wrong, upside down, instead the ground rose up and wrapped around the star. Almost unnoticed by the group a UNSC Four star Admiral walked up to meet them.

"Welcome to Trevelyan Ambassadors, I hope your journey was a pleasant one." the Admiral greeted, everyone's attention turned to him. He seemed a lot friendlier than most human Admirals, veterans from a war they refused to talk about.

"Admiral Sullivan, I was quite surprised that we are departing from here, I would have thought it would be from Eridnus or even Sol, but here? I assume there's a good reason for it." Ambassador Chance greeted the Admiral, they shook hands as part of their greeting.

"There is, she's just one short trip away." Admiral Sullivan said joyfully, he rubbed his hands together and had an excited smile on his face.

* * *

><p>UNSC Colony World Shanxi, Shanxi-Theta System, Fire Base Epsilon, 1624 hours, September 28, 2587

"KROGAN!" the warning from Victus came too late, the large nine hundred pound armoured alien jumped inside the trench, wielding a weapon with a barrel large enough for a 40mm grenade to be fired from it. It landed on a marine whose ribs and chest were crushed under its feet and his organs were turned into a pink and red mush between the aliens toe's. As Becky and the other marines turned to face the intruder it lifted one of its large feet and brought it down on the dead marines face, and crushed it, turning it into another small pile of mush in the blood soaked mud. The Krogan as Adrien called it, lifted the large weapon in its hands and fired. An ODST was torn in half as the powerful armour piercing round shredded the ODST.

"Shit!" Becky exclaimed, she opened fire on the alien, only for the rounds to stop dead in there tracks as a blue shield popped up. She cursed as they held, even as twelve men fired unceasingly at it. The alien reloaded it's gun and fired again, this time at a marine just in front of Becky. The soldier was crouched to allow other troops to fire over him, the blast turned his head and shoulders into a mist of red gore and brain matter. The round still had enough force to knock Becky back and double over as it impacted her stomach. Some of the metal shards pierced her armour and sliced through her under-suit.

"SARGE!" Train called out, the alien stomped towards her, his shields fell from the combined fire but still it moved, barely noticing the bullets striking it. Before it could reach her a flash of black and blue smacked into it, Train had hit it with enough force to stop it and cause it to stagger but that was it. Focussing on Train who pulled out his combat knife, and jumped on top of the alien, keeping it focussed on him. The Krogan roared and thrashed about to dislodge the ODST who was hanging to the hump on its back and was stabbing wildly at the aliens head. It managed to get a hold on Train's shoulder pad, and yanked him round so they were face to face. The alien let out a small chuckle, raised its gun to Trains centre of mass. Train punched down on the aliens crested head with all his might, and managed to wedge his knife between two of the aliens crest plates. It almost looked frightened for a second before it let out another roar and fired. The point blank shot didn't blast him apart but tore a messy hole straight through him and launched him backwards into the soldiers waiting to get a clear shot on the alien. The force of the round had thrown Train across the trench but he had still held his knife with a death grip and had taken the alien crest with him.

The alien howled with pain and anger, the force of the roaring shook the ground slightly. With the armoured head plate gone the marines didn't hesitate to fire at its unprotected skull. It fell into the mud and slumped down over one of the marines it had killed, its face torn apart and its back had more holes than the metal grid beneath it. Orange blood oozing from the wounds and onto the trench floor. The muddy water was now a mixture of red, orange and brown as it sloshed around beneath the walking platforms in the trench. It was than that Becky realised that the ground was still shaking, and as she faded from consciousness as she continued to bleed out, she saw the five and a half hundred meter long Frigate high up in the sky, its deck gun orientated to fire down at the forest where who knew how many aliens were, still moving forward, and being blasted apart by the Frigate. She heard someone call for a medic, it sounded like Victus. It was nice to know that not all aliens were as bad as the

history vids proclaimed, she thought to herself before everything went black.

* * *

><p>Orbit above UNSC Colony World Shanxi, Shanxi-Theta System, UNSC Orbital Installation Crown, September 28**

Fire team Leader Michael Fletcher hated Zero-G, he absolutely hated it. Too many things could go terribly wrong and he could end up dyeing as he floated aimlessly through space with little to no hope of rescue. He should be safe enough now that he and the rest of Crimson had made contact with the outer hull of the Crown but he would feel better once they were inside. Moving along the outside of the station they moved towards an empty airlock, from there, they'd breach and the rest of the mission would be a cake walk. At least a small part of him hoped it would, he didn't want to end up like Zuma, especially after all Crimson went through on Requiem. It would be really shit to be killed by some four eyed psychopath with a god complex. Arriving to the airlock the teams demo expert placed a small directional det-pack on the door. They moved to make sure they weren't thrown into space by the blast and Michael watched as Mira held up three fingers, then two, then one. Just before the charge detonated she let out a small quip.

"Knock, knock."

15. Chapter 15

Hello everybody! I am sorry my updates are slow but I have my reasons, most of them stemming from my mother, or ex-mother, i dunno. But as i said, I'm sorry but i'm not stopping. i will continue until each and everyone of you tell me to stop because i'm just that awful. Any way Reviews are love! So is toast but mostly reviews. so leave one. Enjoy!

* * *

><p>Classified ONI Mobile Base, September 30, 2586

The meeting room was shrouded with an almost complete darkness, a large table dominated the centre of the room. Even the darkness the scorch marks and nicks in the two century old wood from all the officers that had sat there over the years.

"The discovery of the Citadel Council is most unprecedeted. We can't risk another war against a conglomerate of aliens." One of the figures said, an Army Colonel acting as the head of covert military actions.

"They are not a threat, they lack the technology and naval power to truly be a threat." The figure at the head of the table said. Her voice was slow, emotionless and cold. Four stars that glittered on her shoulders were the only part of her that was visible to the other people in the room until she leaned forward and rested her elbows on the table, her uniform sleeves now visible.

"The Colonel's right and they might not be a threat now, but later

on? We can't take that risk. To coexist peacefully now they will almost surely demand access to Forerunner technology and who knows what will happen if we give it to them." A Vice Admiral said.

"Nothing. Nothing will happen, Forerunner technology only responds to humans and Forerunners. They wouldn't be able to do anything with it except poke it with a stick." A Rear Admiral retorted.

"Have you forgot the Covenant Rear Admiral? Your not that young. You know they derived that technology from the Forerunner Key-Ship they had, and look devastation they brought upon us with that!" The Admiral said condescendingly.

"It took them over two thousand years to reach that point-" The Rear Admiral was cut off by the head of the table.

"We can't just think about now. We have to think two thousand, five thousand, ten thousand, a hundred thousand years into the future. We need to make sure the human race lives that long, unopposed as leaders of the galaxy." she replied.

"I have a proposal than, something that will insure no other race, any race, will be able to rise up and challenge us." the Colonel said, the Admirals in the room all leaned in closer, interested at what he had to say.

"Remember; the Forerunners were defeated because they didn't have anyone else strong enough to fight the Flood."

"They'll be able to advance technologically but only as far as we want them to." the Colonel replied, "I propose a new generation of Spartans, they'll be fast, strong, smart and most importantly, they'll be undetectable. Agents placed in positions that nobody would expect them, like a lowly dock worker, a beggar, a bank manager, a teacher. They won't just eliminate potential threats, both domestic and foreign but make their deaths seem accidental, nothing will ever be traced back to us."

"And how many agents are you planning exactly? What will their training consist of? What type of gear will they be issued?" The leading figure said, her voice still cold but it was lightened by the curiosity in it.

"One for each habited continent on every world at least. They'll have the very best training and they'll use what ever they need."

"Assuming you can get the file on my desk by tomorrow morning, your little... operation is approved."

"Thank you Admiral, Operation Blackbriar is not something you'll regret." The Colonel replied, a smile was evident in his voice.

"See to it that it isn't." The head of ONI said, her voice cooler than ever.

* * *

><p>Orbit above UNSC Colony World Shanxi, Shanxi-Theta

System, UNSC Orbital Installation Crown, September 28, 2586**

The four man Spartan team moved through the station quickly, the alien defenders unable to stop the augmented super-soldiers. Fletcher took the lead, firing his two Magnums with terrifying accuracy. Mira and Orlav both fired their SAWs, pumping out enough lead to keep the aliens in cover while Galliard moved up with Fletcher using Tactical Cloaks.

"These are those SpecOps guys- the ones with the shields. Be careful Crimson." Fletcher said as he pulled out an EMP grenade, a small device that would fry the enemy electronics and leave them vulnerable, leaving Crimson with easy pickings. De-cloaking behind a support rung in the wall Fletcher threw the grenades as Orlav and Mira stopped firing, heard them land with small dinks and then detonate with an electronic pulse. The aliens stopped firing.

Curious. Fletcher thought, he pooped his head round and saw the aliens behind a makeshift barricade, cursing in their disgusting language as they realised their guns didn't work, their shields were fried and their portable shields had collapsed, leaving them exposed. He looked back at Crimson and nodded. A cacophony of gunfire erupted for two whole seconds before it went silent again and the alien defenders were dead.

"Good work kids, that room there is the command centre, that's where our target is. He hasn't run, he hasn't got anywhere to run to. So lets grab him and go home and Ice cream is on me this leave." Fletcher said as they moved up towards the door cautiously, there was no need to rush in and leave their backs exposed.

"Mm-mm, I do love a triple flavoured Cornetto on the beach." Galliard joked.

"Sure Galliard, you always were simple minded." Mira couldn't resist digging at her team mate.

"There's nothing wrong with a Cornetto Mira." Galliard defended his choice in ice cream, the team moved in perfect formation, covering each other from any nasty surprises.

As they stacked up against the door to the command centre of the station and the old data storage centre for the stations old A.I, disabled long ago- either from rampancy or the aliens, no one knew, not that it mattered. All that mattered now was finding Edan and bringing him in, he was going to be punished for the crimes he committed. Michael pushed of the wall and lifted his large armoured foot and brought it down just above the lock on the door. The next few seconds lasted both an eternity and just a fraction of a second- the Spartans already heightened senses were boosted by the adrenaline coursing through his system, leaving him in a state where everything moved both quickly and slowly, he could see the actual bullets flying through the air in the room and the white wispy smoke that curled around heated barrels. This moment was only something Spartans experienced, in was phenomena known as Spartan time.

In the centre of the room was Edan, he was still at the command table they'd set up in here, all the ugly alien technology made Michael angry, this station and this planet was human, not alien. It belonged to them. Next to Edan was a large alien, it wore heavy looking armour

over its natural armoured skin. The reports from ground side said that they were krogan, tough bastards loved to fight. Crimson had engaged several while on ground side ops but never at this close range. This particular krogan was larger than the other they'd seen, it was huge, even for krogans. In its hands was something that every Spartan and human and Elite feared, a hammer. While it didn't look like the Brutes devastating weapon he wasn't going to rule it out as a threat. Michael fired off all sixteen rounds in his pistols into near by enemy troops. The krogan was only just reacting to the four Spartans. Good, he's slow. Michael reloaded his pistols and ran at the lumbering alien. As he got closer he noticed how angry the alien was. Rather than back pedal and put extra distance between him and the angry alien with a large hammer Michael ran towards the alien who was too slow to react as Michael jumped and gave the alien a swift kick to the lower jaw with enough force to force the alien backwards and knock its armoured head towards the roof.

As the krogans head lowered to look Michael in the visor, Michael saw the red flowing into the aliens eyes, its muscles started to shake and tense, its throat moved as it conjured up a deafening roar. It grabbed the hammer of its back and charged with an amount of speed that would have caused most people to freeze in terror. The aliens hammer suddenly lit up in a purple hue as as the Krogan raised it over its head. Looking round Michael saw his three team mates engaged with nearly three dozen barians, more were lying on the ground, dead or dying. Turning his attention back to the charging krogan he sidestepped as the hammer connected with the ground, right where he'd been stood a second before. The force of the hammer hitting was more than double of what it should have been. Michael felt the air around him warp and condense before the explosion of dark matter threw him off to one side. Crap, that hurt. He hadn't expected that- the Council races as the new lot of aliens were being called, had few advantages over humans in ground combat, they nearly never ran out of ammo and some of them had something even the Covenant didn't have; Biotics. Individuals who could manipulate an element with no atomic mass and use it to manipulate dark energy. And this Krogan happened to be a biotic. Great.

Michael jumped to his feet again and shook off the disorientation caused by the biotic blast. The krogan was charging him again. As Michael charged the alien himself he made his plan. Instead of sidestepping he slid down low, avoiding the blast and krogan. He stopped his slide and jumped up onto the aliens back and grabbed the hump on its back. While the alien was only taller than Michael by an inch or two at most, it was a lot wider and thicker, meaning the Spartan was hanging off the alien like some sort of alien rodeo. Michael lifted himself up and then planted his knees on the aliens hips. The enraged alien was bucking like a mad bull but Michaels grip stayed firm as he used one hand to reach for the one weapon he knew would be able to stop the angry alien in its tracks. A snap and crackle as the sword ignited caused the krogan to stop briefly as the blade was brought to life. The two pronged Covenant energy sword was one of the most feared weapons ever created. The sight of it alone has been know to win entire ground engagements, mostly against Kig-yar or Unggoy and even innies. Michael brought the sword up and then down, the super heated plasma blade cut the front half of the aliens head clean off., leaving only half a brain and the back of its throat.

Michael stood, smoke rising up from his armour and sword, the fire

fight was woefully lopsided, the Spartans were superior in every way, from speed to training. Although out numbered nine to one, the Spartans were showing just how superior they were. Michael made eye contact with Edan across the room, the alien leader was scared. Michael smiled beneath his helmet, the alien knew his forces were going to lose. Several shots from an enemy rifle flickered across his shields causing him to look towards his assailant. Snapping back into action the team leader darted and closed the gap between him and the aliens that were still standing. He grabbed his other sword and started slashing and hacking, moving too fast for the aliens to react or get a clean shot on him. He weaved and ducked, the two swords flashed and blood literally boiled as he moved through the enemy crowd. His team focused on the batarians ahead of his path to avoid hitting him accidentally.

The last batarian between him and Edan fell to the floor, its headless body dropped like a string-less puppet. The rest of Crimson moved to surround the alien leader who desperately tried to regain control over the situation despite the four soldiers that had just wiped out everything he'd thrown at them.

"What do you want you pathetic little worms, I shall lead my people to glory and to their rightful place as the rulers of the galaxy!" he spat at them. This deluded little alien disturbed Michael more than he'd care to admit- he sounded like one of the Prophets of the Covenant who were so deluded by their own fantasies they failed to realise they were defeated. Even as the Flood infested the High Prophet of Truth he still spoke of the glory of the Covenant and the Great Journey.

"Yeah, yeah. Save it for the hearing." Mira grumbled. "Edan Had'dah you are under arrest for crimes against the Mantle and against Humanity. You are not entitled to any form of legal protection and will be held in maximum security prison until the High Court are ready to begin proceedings. Do you understand?" Mira droned, she didn't like the idea of arresting the guy, they should just kill him and be done with it.

"You are nothing but slaves and toys! You will pay for this... this HERECY!" he shouted back. Orlav placed the handcuffs around his wrists and shoved him towards one of the doors that would lead them to a hanger bay.

"I'll take that as a yes." Mira said as she followed close behind.

"Well done Crimson, mission accomplished." Michael congratulated his team for another successful mission.

"Once again you managed to pull it off Crimson. Well done and come on home." Admiral Lasky's voice sprung up over the radio.

"Yes sir, we're heading towards the hanger now. A pick up would be mighty appreciated sir." Michael replied.

"Understood Crimson. Your favourite pilot is on the way." Lasky replied, a hint of amusement evident in his voice.

"I always preferred Murphy." Orlav said absently, Lieutenant Murphy had been their de facto pilot after they released him on Requiem and

he had become a part of their little group before long. Time however played it's hand and Murphy had since retired. Now Crimson was left with a stranger everytime.

XX

General Desolas looked expectantly at the younger turian, he had said he had news about objects recovered from the crash before the UNSC took over, sealing it off from all other outside sources. While the humans were temporary allies they weren't trustworthy. They had technology that was far beyond the Council and while they acted nice and humble to him and the other two Council races he knew deep down there was something wrong with them as a species.

"Well? Spit out boy. What did you get?" he questioned, his temper flaring slightly.

"A few things sir; I think you'll like them." The younger turian said. "We managed to secure one of the humans advanced aerial drones as well as get a close look at one of their main ship-to-ship weapons, we drew a rough schematic of it. We didn't have much time before the humans were kicking us off the site.

"Good. Take them to the Immortal, make sure the humans don't know we have them." he said, look up at the looming figure of the four 4km ships hovering over the city with a slight frown. "The spirits know their spying on us, even now." he said quietly to himself, the younger soldier already gone to fulfil his duty.

He was happy with what they'd recovered, the fighter drones were highly advanced and much more capable than turian interceptors. The main cannons of human ships would also be of benefit, of only for Cruisers and Dreadnoughts. Those MAC weapons were far more powerful than the Council's own. He moved back inside the prefab building that was his command centre. Looking at the reports coming in his good mood was improved; batarian forces were all but defeated, only small pockets of resistance remained and would be crushed by night fall. The human military offensive was backing off now as well, freeing up troops to help with the new found refugees- now that they had complete dominance over orbit and air there was nothing to stop the human forces from crushing the remaining batarians. The Council's job was done, the batarians were no longer a threat and they'd even made first contact with an alien race or two, they weren't quite sure regarding these 'Forerunners'.

"Sir, incoming message on all frequencies, it's from the humans." A Lieutenant called over from his station.

"Put it on the main screen." Desolas ordered. Almost as soon as he said it the screen came to life, most of the staff in the command centre stopped to see what it was.

The screen showed a batarian in custody, his hands were cuffed together and tied to a chair. However what surprised him the most was just who it was. Edan Had'dah, currently the most wanted man in the galaxy.

"Attention all batarian ground forces." The screen changed to show Admiral Lasky on the bridge of the monster ship called the Infinity. "We have captured your leader Edan Had'dah, your forces

have been defeated, surrender now and you won't be harmed. Keep fighting and we will wipe out every single one of you. You have one hour to comply." The old human Admiral said before cutting the link.

"Well, that was interesting. Let's see what the batarian's reply is. Maybe they'll finally use their brains and surrender." Desolas said half-heartedly, the crew in the command centre said nothing or looked like they even heard the General but they did, and they agreed with him. Maybe the batarians would finally swallow their pride and surrender.

XX

ONI Research Outpost Trevylen, ***November 11, 2587****

Admiral Sullivan had greeted them on the landing pad, his manner had been friendly and was forthcoming with information regarding their diplomatic mission. Fal and Ambassador Chance introduced themselves to the other members of the delegation; Shipmaster Ferz' Vadum. Tribe Leader Mamaw Dadab of Bohalo and the Icy plains, Ambassador Richard Groundwater and General Howard Black. There were two others on the platform with Admiral Sullivan, both were as tall as the Shipmaster, one was a lady with a flat nose and blue eyes while the other was a large human in an armour system Fal had never seen before, it was an under suit of some sort, it looked like it matched the muscle structure underneath his skin. It had small bits of silver and blue metal were attached around his legs, feet and chest, Fal didn't believe for a second that the man was wearing a complete suit.

"Everyone! Please can I have your attention." Admiral Sullivan called out to the group of diplomats. Everyone stopped their talking and faced the Admiral. "These two people here will be in charge of the political envoy, The Librarian and Commander will answer any questions you may have about the mission. But right now, you have a ship to board so please take your seats on the transport located on your right." Sullivan pointed towards a large machine suspended over a monorail docked at the landing platform.

"This is where I leave you Fal, my name isn't on the list of dignitaries so I'll be on the next transport back to New Babylon." Ambassador Chance said, Fal looked at him.

"Are you sure?"

"Unfortunately yes. I am still needed on New Babylon, the only reason I was here in the first place to make sure you were okay and to inform Ambassador Groundwater about particular cultural differences that might make an appearance. Feel free to ask questions, The Librarian is a Forerunner, she helped make sure the entire galaxy was filled with life after the Halo Event. She'll be in charge so defer to her judgement, she's done enough of these to know what to do." Chance said before leaving, his advice would be well heeded.

The interior of the transportation device was bare, it was simple and silver with glowing seats made of energy. Admiral Sullivan joined them as they began their journey. Fal noticed his aide's were nervous, unsure of what to make of all this. He couldn't blame them. The Librarian had four others like herself with her, three females

and one male. The Commander, as he had been introduced, also had others with him, a brown haired female, a red haired female and a black and silver haired male. All of them in the same armour the Commander wore. The Commander was a pale skinned human with light brown hair and eyes that matched the sky in terms of colour. All of the Commanders group were fighters; strength and power flowed from them, the smell was almost overpowering to Fal'Cai and his aides, he noticed the Shipmaster looked to be in awe of the large warriors, or was he cowering in fear? Fal had never dealt with a Sangheili before, he didn't know their smells or looks, it would take time for him to learn them all.

When the transport came to a halt Fal barely felt it, he had hardly felt even the slightest pull of acceleration. A feat of technology the Tal'Sae had yet to achieve. When the diplomats stepped out of the vehicle they stopped, a ship of some sort, not a UNSC Pelican Fal had come to know and recognise but something else, it was silver and sleek with small wings. But dominating the view was something else. It was a ship he had never even dreamt about. Three large engines on the back of a T shaped hull, it was Human built, he could tell that but it didn't follow any of the design philosophies he had come to expect from the humans. Shaped like 'T' and with thick armour and large weapon emplacements it lacked the hexagonal shape, it was still there but only just. On it's side was the UNSC's logo, an eagle and shield over a world, the ultimate symbol of protection and aggressiveness. The ships name was also printed in large white letters, a stark contrast to the black and dark grey hull. UNSC_Dauntless.

"Ladies and Gentleman, I present to you the UNSC _Dauntless_. The newest ship in the fleet and also the first UNSC ship whose armaments are completely energy based, no more projectile weapons, except for the two hundred missile pods and the back up AAA guns. And now Librarian, here is your ship- try not to scratch the paint." Admiral Sullivan said, he was like a pup on his birthday, happy and incapable of being upset.

"Thank you Admiral. We shall endeavour to return your ship in one peace." The Librarian spoke, her voice was like music to his furry ears. The next few days would prove to be most interesting, everyone was in for a little bit of an education.

16. Chapter 16

**A/N: So, here we go again. Another chapter for this lovely little story of mine. This chapter is dedicated to the many people who wanted to see some real diplomacy going on, I can only hope I delivered something worth while. **

So please, leave a review telling me what you thought of it.

I don't own either franchise, only OC's and OC races are mine.

* * *

><p>UNSC Dauntless, November 11, 2587**

The human ship was beyond anything Fal had ever seen, at three and a half kilometres he knew it wasn't the largest human ship but he had

heard one of the Librarians aides mention how it was on par with a Forerunner Dreadnought, whatever one of them was. The empty halls were clear and wide, a massive difference compared to older UNSC and all Tal'Sae ships, walls were covered in smooth silver and white panels, not even markings on the walls to show which way to go for a particular part of the ship, it was all clean. How did the crew know where to go?

He might have struggled to remember where to go through the maze of halls and elevators but the Librarian seemed to know her way around despite never being on the ship before herself. The bridge was at the top on the thickest part of the hull, despite being buried under three meters of some new human alloy there was still a view port at the front of the bridge from which the crew could see into space. Unlike the UNSC Bite Me the bridge was far more spacious, each station had incredible 3D holographic controls that could be moved and manipulated by the crew member. In the centre was a command chair, although it looked more like a throne than simple chair to Fal, was that a good sign or a bad one? The back half of the bridge was raised and separated, in it contained an odd looking table that glowed blue and atop it was a hologram of the planet they were inside of.

The Librarian seemed to frown at the command chair on the raised platform and decided to stand by it instead while the crew efficiently started the ship up for the first time outside of trial runs. The Commander stood on the other side of the command chair while his large human compatriots took positions at important looking stations, their large hands manipulating the holograms with ease. Before he really knew it the massive ship was lifting up into the air and transitioning into Slip-space, the blue and black portal always looked unbelievable whenever he saw one. He spent the time in slip-space talking with other members of the delegation while his aides did the same.

After speaking to the Shipmaster and Tribal Leader he found that the two races, Sangheili and Unggoy used to be at war with the humans before Fal had even been born. According to the Shipmaster it was a war that nearly saw the destruction of the entire galaxy and that despite everything the humans were willing to forge an alliance to prevent another war on such a scale, but something happened and the two races now only spoke in diplomatic talks when absolutely necessary like the discovery of a coalition of aliens that matched the old Covenant.

"The large humans I have only heard of in tales, demons that could kill entire armies single-handedly. I heard a story where it was just one of them and the Arbiter against the Parasite and Loyalists and the two came out victorious; they stood atop the corpses of a thousand brutes and surrounded by the Prophets destroyed army." The Shipmaster said in a hushed tone.

"You mean you never heard about the battle of Onyx? Hundreds of thousands of Covenant with air support and armour against thirteen combat capable soldiers, we killed them all. And just remember this, Spartans never die." A female voice said from their left, it was the female with red hair and eyes so green they reminded Fal of an Esmaralda_gem. The Sangheili and Fal both bowed in respect causing the human to roll her eyes, something that made Fal's own eyes hurt just thinking of performing it. Instead of saying anything she just

shook her head and walked away, it rustled Fal's fur at being shown so much disrespect but she probably didn't mean it in such a way. Ambassador Chance had informed him that many humans thought of bowing as a rather old fashioned gesture and that only certain cultures still did it in human society.

Fal also spent some time looking into what information the UNSC had available on the government they were going to meet with. Other than being based on a space station in the middle of a nebulae and comprised of the three leading races, Turians, Asari and Salarians the UNSC didn't know all that much about them. Half an hour before arriving the Librarian gathered everyone's attention without raising her voice, which in itself was like silk in the air, beautiful and majestic. Something no one ignored.

"We do not know much about this government system, only that it has certain laws for which every species must abide by. Except we will not, unlike them all our races have created artificial intelligence's, some more advanced than others, where as this Citadel Council has not and had decreed that they are too dangerous and they should be disabled. However, due to humanities and Forerunner heavy reliance on them we will argue this point. It is up to your individual governments on how you wish to proceed in these talks. The Citadel Council also expect you to minimise your fleets and military powers so that they can take over the need to defend your space." As she was saying this Fal felt his blood burn in his veins at the thought of reducing his peoples military power just for some aliens to defend his people for him, the growl coming from the Sangheili Shipmaster was an indication that he wasn't the only one who disapproved of that idea.

"I have a feeling that the Citadel Council won't like that we're not going to bow down to their wishes, from what I heard they're used to getting their own way and think that they are the most powerful force in the galaxy, apparently it's a great honour to be asked to become an affiliate race to the Council. God knows that isn't going to happen." The UNSC General said. "They also don't like genetic manipulation so it's a god damn good thing we ain't joining up with them otherwise we'd have to try and put down the most powerful soldiers in the galaxy, I feel sorry for anyone who tries to enforce that."

"Indeed. Now, we know a general idea of what they will ask of us in return for their protection and alliance. It is up to you on your stance with them." The Librarian said, although Fal knew his stance before he even left Zion, the humans were their protectors, the humans were the protectors of the entire galaxy if certain rumours were true. When the Dauntless entered normal space again it was surrounded by an expansive pink-purple nebulae, a small twinkle of stars in the distance was their destination, the Citadel.

* * *

><p>Shanxi, Shanxi-Theta System, Fire Base Epsilon, 1652, September 28, 2587

It was a mess. The entire base was nothing but smoking ruins after the assault, Marines and ODSTs were sorting through the ruins, looking for the dead so that they could be given a proper burial back on their home worlds. Marcus Knight just looked over the growing rows

and columns of black body bags. One of them was Eugene, or Train as the team used to call him, one was filled with an alien body, the Turian that nobody in the team knew the name of simply because they couldn't be bothered to learn it. Coulson was being carted off to the Hopeful, along with hundreds of other wounded, most of them from here, the rest from various other fronts all across Shanxi. Marcus ran a dirty and bloody hand across his equally dirty and bloody face, as he tried not remember the events of the last two days, he'd lost two friends and far too many brothers in arms.

"So, Felix how are you after all this?" A distinct voice said as a black armoured body sat beside him. Sergeant Nick Medhurst looked just as worn out as Marcus felt, he could see the Sergeants team milling about, doing what ever they needed to do.

"Shit. Really, really shit. I mean, we've raided Innies strongholds and pirate bases and come out without so much as a scratch but here? Two fucking days and we loose Shepard and Train and Coulson's mortally wounded and on the Hopeful. Two Turians are gone, Adrien and Vakarian are on the horn with their command for instructions." Marcus replied.

"Well, I don't know what will happen next but I do know it's over. What remains of the batarian forces are either surrendering or dead." Medhurst said, he clapped a hand on Marcus' shoulder before continuing. "Anyway, Captain Dixon is going to be mighty pissed if she sees you slacking off Felix."

"Yeah, yeah. Let's get the hard part over and done with." He said and indeed it was the hard part, anyone of the dead could be somebody he knew and were now nothing more than statistic and a memory to those who knew them. It was hard for anybody to drag the dead out from collapsed trenches and ruined bunkers and buildings.

* * *

><p>UNSC Hopeful, Orbit over Shanxi, Shanxi-Theta System**

Walking through the whitewash halls of the oldest and most decorated hospital ship in the UNSC Navy gave most people perspective. Perspective on how lucky one might be to be picked up by the old ship and how lucky they were to be alive, but for Admiral Lasky the bright halls and white panels everywhere just gave him a headache. Doctors and medical technicians moved out his way as he all but barrelled through halls, the two marines either side of him was just extra encouragement to stay out the old Admirals way.

When he arrived at the room he wanted he found a doctor exiting the room, she was looking down at a data pad and updating the patients status. Looking up she seemed shocked by the appearance of the Admiral.

"Admiral, can I help you?" She asked almost hesitantly, she reached up and pushed a pair of glasses up her nose.

"Yeah, how's the patient doc?" He asked, making a gesture to the door she'd just come out of, the doctor looked back at the door and then back at the Admiral.

"Stable, he's just come out of surgery. He's lost his left arm and right eye, we can't start cloning any replacements until he's awake and coherent enough to give consent. He's pretty lucky to be alive Admiral, I don't know of anybody to survive being thrown out of a crashing escape pod." The doctor replied, she double checked the data pad in her hands just in case she missed anything.

"He's the luckiest person in the Navy other than the Chief but he also has a habit of being in the wrong place at the right time." Lasky said.

"Yeah, no kidding." The doctor said, "We also found this in a pocket on his uniform." She said, pulling out an A.I data crystal from her breast pocket on her perfect white lab coat before handing it to Lasky.

"Thanks doc, I'll take care of that. Keep an eye on the Commander doc, HIGHCOM will want him after that stunt. Let me know when he's awake and coherent doctor." Lasky said before turning and leaving before the doctor could even utter a reply. On the way back through the Hopeful Lasky held Lorelie's chip in his hand, he wondered what she had to say about the whole situation.

* * *

><p>Serpent Nebulae, Citadel, Presidium Tower, Council Chambers, 2156

Tevos was nervous. Today was the day history was about to be made- the first diplomatic talks between two galactic powers and she was right at the centre of it. Her actions could make the difference between a long and peaceful alliance or it could end with a long and bloody war whose victor was still to be determined and if it ended with war her place as the Asari councilwoman would be stripped and she would be lucky if she could find work in a strip club.

Of course they would extend the offer of joining the citadel but deep down in her gut she knew it wouldn't be that simple, the humans, as they were called, were far more advanced than originally believed and were just as adapt at war as the Krogan and Turians. General Oraka had forwarded as much information as possible before delivering his report in person, the humans had needed time to rebuild their land and to organise a diplomatic team for the talks with the council. The good General had also informed them of certain aspects of human civilisation that he had been privy to and not all of it was pretty, in fact some of it was just as bloody as the Krogans own history. He had informed them of a certain feud between human colonies, a group of Insurrectionists as the human crews and soldiers called them, were using terrorist actions against the very government that had fought and bled to protect them during 'the bloodiest war in human history'.

The humans had given a date for the first diplomatic talks before all but forcing Council ships out of their space and back into council space, it wasn't the best start one could hope for but it was better than a war and they were at least willing to talk. General Desolas had also mentioned some rather unfavourable facts such as the presence of another race that was 'very well muscled and would no doubt be more than a match for even the strongest of Krogan', and the humans liberal use of artificial intelligence's, an illegal creation

in citadel space. Sparatus, the Turian Councillor was almost furious at the revelation of A.I's and how the human Navy was apparently on par with Turians own, something else that was technically illegal in council space, but the Council didn't have authority over the humans or any allies they have and until they did Tevos and Sparatus was unable to enforce those laws.

Humans had apparently mastered a form of FTL that didn't use element zero, mass effect or mass relays which allowed them a wider range of tactics in space combat and they were faster then the councils own fleet in FTL, a lot faster. A trip that should take weeks could be done in hours, this marvel of technological advancement had nearly every Salarian drooling at the thought of the science behind it. When the human vessel arrived Tevos had expected it to just appear in a flash of light like in the pre-space flight vids most cultures have, instead it appeared in a brilliant display of blue and green light that swirled around a powerful gravitational field that emitted so much radiation nearby ships were going into lock-down as their internal sensors malfunctioned.

The human ship was three kilometres long and was covered in a thick grey armour that provided more protection than a council Dreadnought and it emitted more energy per second than all the Cruisers in the Citadel Defence Fleet, other than the advanced FTL drive Tevos couldn't fathom a guess as to what would need that much power, after all the ship had no obvious weapons apart from some small cannons dotted around the hull and unless they were more powerful than they looked she figured that they didn't need that much power. Before too long a small shuttle departed the gargantuan vessel and moved towards the Citadel with a speed that would make fighter pilots green with envy. By the time it had touched down at the specially reserved dock Tevos had dismissed the handmaidens from the private chambers where the meeting would take place, a precaution so that if things didn't go the way the council hoped than they wouldn't lose face with the public.

* * *

><p>Fal stepped out of the diplomatic shuttle and took in the sights and smells around him, while everything looked peaceful and calm Fal could smell the anxiety and fear and excitement in the air, the dock had been closed off from the general public but as he stood around the hatch waiting for the other ambassadors to gather round he could see a crowd of aliens being held back by more aliens in blue armour, his ear twitched in irritation at the misuse of a royal colour but he said nothing as these people were aliens and not used to his peoples traditions and therefore not aware of the offence caused by it. Small drones hovered above the alien crowd, they were recording the arrival of foreign dignitaries, not an uncommon thing to do when meeting a new race for the first time, his own people had done it when humans first landed on Zion and the humans had done it when the Tal'Sae first visited Earth, the only difference between than and now was that Fal and the Tal'Sae people had been scared of the humans and their more advanced technology, now Fal was more on equal terms meaning there was no need to be submissive to this new government.</p>

A dark coloured alien with a head crest walked up to them, he was a Turian according to the data on the _Dauntless_, he too was dressed in the blue armour but his was coloured with red highlights, an

indication of higher rank Fal presumed. He was proven correct when the Turian introduced himself as Executor Pallin and the head of Citadel Security, the Executor was well cultured and mannered Fal figured, but than again he lived and worked on a space station that was home to millions of people from a dozen different races so he was bound to be. Citadel Security was not comprised of a single race which implied a heavy amount of cross species cooperation and for a space station like this that was good as there wasn't really room for cross species feuds to take a hold or it would be chaos and their carefully crafted civilisation would crumble. Human marines acted as an escort, dressed in their iconic green and grey plated armour and armed with their powerful assault rifles they were the centre of hushed conversations between the Citadel Security guards, while others spoke about the large Spartans that were now fully armoured in an almost menacing armour configuration which Fal figured was done on purpose as a slight intimidation technique, they all had weapons attached to their backs although if the stories the Shipmaster had said were even remotely true than he doubted they would need them to get out of here. Other guards spoke about the large Sangheili Shipmaster and the squat Unggoy Tribe Leader, a few even spoke about him, a blue female alien had made a remark about his royal blue and silver fur and how she wouldn't mind 'learning everything he had to offer', a lewd remark that made bile rise up his throat which he quickly swallowed again lest he spit it out in front of ancestors knew how many people, not exactly a good first impression.

The walk up the tower to meet the actual council was a bore for Fal, he had no interest in seeing where various things happened in the tower, he only wanted to meet with their leaders and get it over with, the bored expressions on the humans faces showed that they felt the same. He knew it was rude to listen to the hushed conversations between their alien escort but he couldn't help himself, it wasn't his fault that he was born with a far superior sense of hearing than them, whenever a Tal'Sae wished to have a hushed conversation they didn't, on Zion during the olden times it was a crime punishable by death and while that was no longer true it still held a certain social stigma that discouraged hushed conversations or you could be seen as untrustworthy and the higher up the social chain you were the worse the punishment was, an Alpha male like himself would be exiled and caste away never to return to his place of birth, an Alpha female would be pushed into the slums and neutered, both were the ultimate humiliation a Tal'Sae could endure in the modern age and it was because of this that he always spoke loudly and clearly if he had something to say, a trait he was also teaching his pups.

"The Council is just in here ambassadors, it was an honour to escort you here and to show you the Presidium Tower." The Executor said, despite the pleasant manner in which he spoke Fal could hear the slight fluctuations in his voice that showed the Executor was lying, he was just as bored as the rest of them and wasn't happy about being their escort, he was happy it was over and that he was no longer directly responsible for their well-being, what worried Fal however was why he was concerned for their well-being in the first place.

Two large wooden doors with golden linings opened up to an impeccable room, the air was clean and lacked the smells of a well used room. It was decorated with simple drapes and flowers, paintings of what was most likely past councillors dotted the walls white and silver walls. There was no window in the room, either they were at the very heart

of the tower or this was a room for more private conversations to be held in, which was another thing that was not uncommon with most species except his own. Sat at a plain metal table was the three councillors, the blue female alien race, an Asari, was sat at the centre with the Turian and Salarian councillors on her right and left flanks respectively. It was a subtle but powerful power play technique, the Turian councillor represented power and authority on her right while the Salarian represented underhand and less than honourable techniques on her left and she represented order and balance in the centre. It was a ploy any educated Tal'Sae would see through in an instant, a quick glance at the human General and ambassador showed that they too were thinking something similar.

"Greetings and welcome to the Citadel." The Asari said in a silky smooth voice, unlike the Librarians voice though the Asari's voice felt more like venom that burnt his veins, it was all he needed not to trust her. "I am Councillor Tevos, representative of the Asari Republics and Thessia, to my right is councillor Sparatus, the representative of the Turian Hierarchy and Palaven, to my left is councillor Valern, representative of the Salarian Union and Sur'kesh." The councillors nodded and greeted them with their own cultural greeting, a salute, a bow and a hand over the heart and lowering of the head. The greetings were returned in kindness before the Librarian introduced herself.

"I am the Librarian, a Forerunner Lifeworker and lead representative of our delegation." The Librarian said, her voice reminded Fal of the tone his mother used when singing him a lullaby as a pup, he felt himself give a slight purr in appreciation of her voice. She reached out with her right hand over the table and placed her hand with the her palm open to ceiling, for the Tal'Sae it was a gesture of peace and trust as they had a major artery running through their wrists, to expose it showed that you trusted whoever it was with your life. Tevos reached out slowly with her hand and rested it next to the Librarians own. The old Forerunner lady grabbed Tevos's hand and positioned it in the proper way to greet her for future reference.

"General Howard Black, UNSC Marine Corps. A real pleasure." The General spoke around a cigar, an oddity that humans liked to smoke. He spoke with pride of his rank and affiliation but with sarcasm and displeasure for the greeting. He held out a hand for the three councillors, unlike the Librarian he held it vertically, it didn't take long for the three councillors to figure out the greeting.

"Ambassador Richard Groundwater from the Unified Earth Governments. Humanities civilian government and civilian oversight of the UNSC during peacetime." The ambassador said with a much more genuine tone. He shook grasped their hands as he shook them, a peculiar but noticeable difference between the two humans, while Fal had learnt that no two humans were the same he also understood the difference between the two handshakes, the Generals spoke of a lack of interest and lack of trust where as the ambassadors spoke of friendliness and openness.

"Shipmaster Ferz 'Vadum, part of the Vadum keep on Sanghelios and Shipmaster of the Glorious Conquest." The Sangheili said, he struck his right arm over his left heart in a Salute. He spoke with a type

of pride that few could, he was proud of his origins and proud of his position. All to quickly Fal realised that it was his turn to introduce himself.

"I am Fal'Cai, Alpha male of the city of Tol'Daem and leader of the Tal'Sae people." He spoke sincerely but with a hint of authority, a subtle way to shift the power over to his side of the table even more. They didn't know how small an area of space the Tal'Sae controlled or that their borders where patrolled by UNSC Navel vessels.

"And I am Tribal Leader Mamaw Dadab of the Icy Plains on Bohalo. I represent the Unggoy people in the wider galaxy." Fal had done his research on the _Dauntless_ and he knew that Mamaw had been the one to ask the humans for help with their collapsing ecostructure and civilisation. After hundreds of years of being used as nothing more than manual labour and cannon fodder the Unggoy people were unable to support themselves without the Covenant until Mamaw did what every other Unggoy thought was suicide; ask the humans, who were quick to welcome them with open arms as they repaired the damage done to the Unggoy homeworld and helped restore the old Unggoy way of life.

"It is an honour to meet you all." Tevos said with a human like smile. "I must admit though, I was only expecting to be having these talks with the humans so I'm sure you can understand if we are surprised to see so many different races."

"Of course, the humans are indeed the ones in charge of this delegation however they asked me to oversee the diplomatic missions between yourselves and the humans as their last attempt at first contact with a government similar to your own ended in disaster and they wish to avoid it happening again." The Librarian said. It was than that Fal realised that the Commander hadn't introduced himself in the greetings, he was a senior member of the delegation so why was he and his team stood against the walls while the rest of them sat down, bar the Marines of course.

"I see, if that is the case than I hope we can all leave this meeting happy." Tevos said. Than came the part that Fal hated; history time. The Council races had led a rather boring existence, they had fought an insect race known as the Rachni and had only won with the uplifting of a violent race called the Krogan who quickly rebelled against the council. The Krogen Rebellions were ended with the arrival of the Turian Hierarchy and deployment of a bio-weapon called the Genophage. That particular detail had caused some strife amongst the two groups, the Librarian was disgusted with it's use and intention. The human General had a little more to say on the matter though.

"I won't condone the use of unconventional tactics to defeat an enemy but seriously? You neutered an entire race for two thousand years and wonder why they want to kill you? I suggest you lessen it's effect before you wipe out the Krogans." General Black said, he sounded more like he was growling than speaking.

"Absolutely not!" The Turian councillor rebuffed the idea in an instant. "They would wage war on the Council within a heart beat once they got the numbers."

"Maybe you should teach them to stand with the galaxy rather than

rail against it." The old General quickly replied with a smirk. What he'd said had caught the Council off guard, they hadn't thought of that, no, instead they had buried their heads in the sand, metaphorically speaking.

"They're too violent, they are incapable of being productive members of society." Valern said in a sure manner.

"Someone said the same thing about humans once too. Now look at us, here we are having a diplomatic talk with an alien species and no war to boot. And back when that was said, we were a little worse than the Krogan." The General said, that little revelation was a surprise to any non human in the group it seemed.

"How so?" Tevos queried. Her question was answered with a shrug and dismissal wave of the hand.

"Does it matter? It happened millennia ago, plus, it's classified."

The talks stalled for a while before the Librarian intervened and pushed them forward, the council members carried on with their history. Things got interesting around sixty human years ago when a species called Batarians had decided to try and take control of the galaxy, their surprise attack had given them an early advantage but Turian fleets were quick to halt them and push them back to their home world. Some had managed to escape before their defeat, it had been that conflict that had caused the Batarians to enter human space and take control of the human colony, there had been no counter attack because the humans couldn't spare the ships due to the Covenant. Ever since than Batarians had been banned from council space and those that were left were tied to their homeworld or stuck in an area of space called the Terminus Systems. Now came the humans turn to tell their history.

"I won't bore you with the details of everything in human history. But I guess we could start with the formation of the UEG and UNSC. It all started during the First World War, between 1914 and 1918 with the formation of the League of Nations. The League was disbanded before too long and replaced with the United Nations after the Second World War which lasted from 1939 to 1945, from there it wasn't really until 2160 that something happened with the out break of the Interplanetary war. In 2162 United Nation military forces became united under one banner, the United Nations Space Command, or UNSC, the UEG was formed when all of Earth's nations agreed to a single ruling government to prevent another war on the scale of the Interplanetary war which left tens of millions dead and Earth's largest Rainforest in ruins.

"We had a tough time after that, we had an overly large military, we suffered from famine, overpopulation and nearly suffered an economic collapse that would have destroyed our civilisation. It wasn't until the creation of the Shaw-Fujikawa Translight Engine in 2291 and first colony ship being deployed in 2362 that things finally started looking up for us. For the next hundred and thirty years we colonised space, by 2492 there were eight hundred worlds under our control. We had the highly developed and industrialised Inner Colonies and the more rural and agricultural Outer Colonies who provided the raw resources needed to maintain the Inner Colonies. Unfortunately our lovely era of peace came to a sudden and horrific stop when an entire

colony rebelled and tried to succeed from the UEG and form it's own inter-stellar government. The UNSC's approach for dealing with the trouble makers was... harsh to say the least, we raised the entire colony, turned it into a nuclear wasteland and killed everybody on it. Not our most proud moment I assure you.

"Two years later a full blown Insurrection occurred in the Outer Colonies, but rather than fight a conventional war which they would surely loose the Insurrectionists used terrorist actions, they had no qualms with bombing everything from schools to government buildings. Hell they even detonated nukes in major cities and killed hundreds of thousands. This civil war of ours was forgotten about in 2525 when we made first contact with an alien conglomerate known as the Covenant. In fact, the Shipmaster and Tribal Leader here are both species that used to be apart of the Covenant. They were religious nut jobs that were hell bent on our destruction because their leaders knew that humans were the heir to the Forerunner Empire and not them, we didn't know it at the time so we were shocked when we get a message say that our destruction was the will of the gods, who were the Forerunners, and that the Covenant were their instrument. Needles to say we lost a lot of people and a lot of colonies to the Covenant because they outnumbered us and out gunned us." The General explained dispassionately, he had given up being passionate a very long time ago. The councillors were shocked at the bloody history of the human race, and to think that they were still around in the galaxy spoke volumes on just how tenacious humanity was.

"You used nuclear devices on a garden world? Are you people insane? Garden worlds are rare and can't be destroyed by petty squabbles of an upstart race." The Turian Councillor said, to Fal's surprise the General just smacked his forehead with the palm of his hand.

"Seriously? The Covenant destroyed nearly seven hundred worlds by turning them into glass and murdered thirty billion people in the name of false gods and you call my people insane? And for that matter have you even heard of terraforming technology? It's this amazing thing that lets you turn an uninhabitable rock into a beautiful 'garden world'." General Black snapped.

"Terraforming a planet like that is not possible, and I highly doubt that an advanced conglomerate of sentient beings would destroy seven hundred worlds by turning them into 'glass', even if it were possible to do so. I'm certain your people must have provoked this 'Covenant' into a war, if they were advanced as you claim than they should have surpassed the need to pointlessly wage war." Sparatus said dismissing the human General, for what was probably the hundredth time Fal was again surprised when the Shipmaster spoke up instead of General Black.

"It is true. The Covenant did wage war against the humans for the reasons he claims, some of my people still do to this day. The Kaidon of the Vadum Keep fought in the war against the humans, he used to tell us tales of how he led entire fleets of the Covenant's mighty warships and conquered human worlds before using his ships energy projectors and turning the surface of the planets into glass to wipe the human presence from them." Ferz said with sorrow lacing his every word, almost as if he felt guilty for what his people had done despite not being born until after the war had ended.

"I think that is enough for one day, no? We shall return to our ship and continue these talks tomorrow before something is said that might be regretted." The Librarian said, cutting off whatever the Turian councillor had to say.

"Agreed, it has been a long day with many startling revelations. A rest would be beneficial to both parties." Tevos agreed. On the way back to the docks Fal heard General Black and the Commander talking.

"That bastards lucky Chief, I nearly punched his stupid bony head in, the nerve of that guy- doubting our struggles as nothing more than fantasy and provocation and lies. I'd like to see him tell that to the thirty billion souls the Covenant took from us."

"Yeah, I understand sir. Might I suggest you show him some evidence next time if he tires to dismiss the war again."

"Hmm, good idea Chief. Any ideas on what to show him?"

"I was thinking of Psi Serpentis, Draco III and Reach, sir. Show them something to make them realise how bad the war got." The Commander replied. Fal couldn't understand why General Black was calling him 'Chief' but he had his reasons, Fal was sure.

"Cole's Last Stand, the Draco III Massacre and The Fall of Reach? Damn Chief, you trying to make the guy crap himself?" General Black said.

"Just showing them we weren't lying is all, sir." General Black shook his head and gave sadistic laugh.

"Sure Chief. Whatever you say." Black said before leaving the Commander and slowing down to talk with Ferz and thanking him for 'sticking up for their mutual history'. The Asari councillor had been right, it had been a long day and Fal looked forward to a good nights sleep before continuing with the talks. For him he had learnt a lot about the galaxy and that one needed to be ruthless from time to time and not be afraid to do it, was that why humans were protectors of the galaxy? Because they weren't afraid to bomb planets into dust and eradicate their enemies or turn those enemies into friends? Fal didn't know for certain but he was sure it had something to do with it.

End
file.